

ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSES IN CHALLENGING TIMES: A CASE STUDY OF  
ASYLUM SEEKER AND REFUGEE THIRD SECTOR ORGANISATIONS

BY

Vita Terry

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School of Social Policy

University of Birmingham

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## **ABSTRACT**

Third sector organisations (TSOs) are facing multiple complex and challenging pressures from the shifting economic and political environment, undoubtedly creating an uncertain operating landscape. Although the sector encompasses a range of forms, shapes and sizes, policy and practice tend to portray the sector as homogenously experiencing and responding to the environment. This thesis undertakes in-depth case studies using a qualitative research strategy to investigate organisational change in three asylum seeker and refugee TSOs based in England. An ethnographic rationale is used to collect the data, using a range of methods, spending time immersed within the organisations, and a process of reflexivity. The research explores how organisations are affected by, and navigate, these challenging pressures, and what is happening within the organisational setting that influences the processes of organisational change. Drawing on a multi-level framework, including isomorphism, institutional logics, institutional work and emotional work, provides an insightful account of the different layers of organisational change. The case studies demonstrate significant pressures from negative immigration rhetoric and xenophobic attitudes, austerity measures, and changes in the funding environment that all fuel organisational responses. By moving on from being refugee community organisations to becoming established and formalised TSOs, each organisation further expanded into varying forms of hybrid organisation - family/professional, religious and entrepreneurial - depending on differing contextual factors and resources. Nuanced accounts grounded in empirical data are portrayed, of the challenges, tensions and dilemmas faced by the organisations whilst also illustrating the agency of actors' responses. This not only distinguishes the heterogeneity of the sector but also demonstrates the actors' ability to manage uncertainty through resilience and adaptability.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ASR</b>	Asylum Seeker and Refugee
<b>ASRM</b>	Asylum Seeker, Refugee and Migrant
<b>AVR</b>	Assisted Voluntary Return
<b>CAB</b>	Citizens Advice Bureau
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>ESOL</b>	English for Speakers of Other Languages
<b>ESRC</b>	Economic and Social Research Council
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>LA</b>	Local authority
<b>NASS</b>	National Asylum Support Service
<b>NCIA</b>	National Coalition for Independent Action
<b>NCVO</b>	National Council for Voluntary Organisations
<b>NRPF</b>	No Recourse to Public Funds
<b>OCS</b>	Office for Civil Society
<b>OTS</b>	Office for Third Sector
<b>RCO</b>	Refugee Community Organisation
<b>RIES</b>	Refugee Integration and Employment Projects
<b>TSO</b>	Third Sector Organisation

<b>TSRC</b>	Third Sector Research Centre
<b>VSO</b>	Voluntary Sector Organisation
<b>UKIP</b>	UK Independence Party

# CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Third sector landscape

There has been a long history of the third sector playing a service provider role in the mixed economy of welfare in England (the focus of the thesis), although it was not until the late 1990s that the third sector notably became a key player. This stemmed from New Labour actively championing the advantageous features of the sector, investing significant resources to build the sector's capacity, and pushing for an equal playing field in the welfare mix based on the 'Third Way' idea and working in 'partnership' (Kendall, 2000; Carmel and Harlock, 2008). This push by Labour was an attempt to 'modernise' public services in the UK (Cabinet Office, 1999). Following the third sector becoming part of the landscape of service provision, experiencing and learning the new 'rules of the game' in the funding environment, there have since been some stark changes. The construction of the Conservative-led Coalition during 2010-2015 portrayed a rhetoric that appeared to follow similar lines to the previous supportive administration, with the government's agenda of the 'Big Society' suggesting 'civil society' would continue to play a significant role in service provision. However, underlying these policy agendas have been the economic downturn and targeted austerity cuts, which have seen both government support and finances significantly declining for the sector. This shift has continued since the recent election of the Conservative government in 2015 and has seen a less supportive relationship, driven by market-based values and the incentive to reduce public expenditure. At this point it is important to note that the focus of the thesis is based on England. As the UK policy landscape has shifted over the last century, various areas

of policy have been devolved to separate administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, which means these administrations not only have varying pressures but also adopted different approaches to developing and supporting the third sector (Alcock, 2012).

The third sector landscape is multifaceted and complex, therefore should not be perceived to be experienced by third sector organisations (TSOs) in a homogenous manner. The third sector consists of organisations of different shapes, sizes, forms that deliver a range of activities across a spectrum of service users, illustrating the difficulties of capturing the third sector due to its complex nature. In this thesis the term ‘third sector’ has been applied rather than ‘voluntary’ or ‘voluntary and community sector’ due to providing a more encompassing perspective. This research applies the conceptualisation by Rees and Mullins (2016) that coins ‘the third sector as a space of organisational activity located between the state, market and private familial spheres comprising a diversity of organisational types including charities, social enterprises, faith, community, and grass roots’ (p.15). Refer to section 3.2.1. for further discussion.

The complexities of understanding the third sector landscape should not solely be perceived as a response to shifting government approaches. Although the third sector has adopted an increasing role as a service provider, it should not be assumed that all organisations are involved in this arrangement, nor that all organisations receive or are reliant on statutory funding. Only a small population of TSOs are funded by the



government to deliver public services (Clifford et al., 2010). Some TSOs arguably delivering public services are not receiving government funding to support these services, and have to subsidise the services with other revenue. This demonstrates it is not as simple as sometimes proposed within the literature, of the third sector becoming involved in service provision, leading to organisations becoming heavily shaped by commissioning and procurement, and this reliance on statutory funding resulting in a decline in the sector's autonomy. Instead, it is dependent on a number of factors, such as: activity type, subsector, beneficiaries, and where the organisation is situated in the wider context.

The third sector landscape is evidently changing and organisations are having to navigate numerous exogenous factors, such as, the economic recession and austerity measures, shifting government approaches, and welfare reform, and are faced with having to respond to tense and challenging conditions. This has created lively debate over the changing nature of organisations, ranging from 'formalisation', 'professionalisation', 'bureaucratisation' to 'hybridisation', which will be described in sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3. This thesis contests that 'broad-brush' claims should not be applied across the third sector on how organisations are navigating the wider environment and the influence this has in shaping organisational change. Instead, the heterogeneity of the sector should be acknowledged by focusing on subsectors and organisational form, and by doing so create conditions to bring back the complexities and uncertainties of organisational change by taking a more micro-level analysis. This thesis explores organisational change in the asylum seeker and refugee (ASR) subsector, selected for being underreported within the third sector literature and for having a disadvantaged position within the welfare system

due to the politicized nature of the issues. The aim of the study is to delve into the complex environment ASR TSOs operate within, highlighting those pressures essential to understanding the heterogeneity of organisational responses.

The thesis undertakes a multi-layered analysis not only to understand organisational change as a response to exogenous pressures, but also to bring back the focus on endogenous pressures and the role of actors and agency. Other commentators (Mullins and Acheson; 2014; Acheson; 2014) have argued that organisations should not be viewed as passive agents to public services but rather emphasis should be on the agency of the organisations and actors in how they interpret, experience and respond to the operating environment. To illustrate this, the research does not adopt a mechanical approach to demonstrate the current phenomena of organisational change, but instead uses examples from real life situations and events within the organisational settings to illustrate the everyday mundane tensions and dilemmas the workforce faces. The thesis uses grounded empirical data to illustrate how actors are actively responding to the environment around them in a variety of ways, which include failures, successes, adaptation and resilience.

## **1.2. Negative immigration rhetoric**

The UK debate on immigration has become highly contested and politicised in the last 15 years. In the run up to the 2015 General Election a range of fears and anxieties about

migration were in full discussion amongst the political parties. For example, are migrants a drain on the tax payer-funded welfare system? Or, is the rising foreign-born population preventing UK citizens from gaining employment?

These debates were further heightened by current issues such as the financial crisis and austerity measures, and rising unemployment levels. In particular, the far-right political party, UKIP, showed signs of growing popularity during both the local and national election campaign, fundamentally based on anti-immigration rhetoric and blaming 'foreigners' for many of the negative socio-economic problems of the UK. Of concern was the influence these discriminatory beliefs had on mainstream debates on immigration (Carvalho, 2013). For example, the focus of UKIP's campaign on an anti-EU agenda, directly and brashly addressed this sensitive topic, and evidently showed signs of influencing the government via the Eurosceptic strand in the Conservative Party (Balch and Balabanova, 2014), and influencing the decision to hold the in/out EU referendum in June 2016. Over the years the various debates on immigration between different political parties, and the continuous changes in policy, have established immigration as a key political issue (Sales, 2002). These contested debates and extremist views were part of the contextual framework within which the research for this thesis was conducted.

Amongst the public there are particular changing attitudes towards specific sub-groups within the community. Certain groups in the community are found to be acutely more unpopular than the mainstream population due to being viewed as 'undeserving', be it

substance misusers, offenders, or ASRs (Sales, 2002; Van Oorschot, 2006), all of whom are then pushed towards the edges of the welfare system. These negative perceptions, seeing rising immigration as a 'problem' rather than an 'opportunity' (Gallagher, 2014) have spurred a number of public opinion polls (e.g. British Future, 2013; YouGov, 2013) to assess the main fears and concerns. These have emerged as:

- The loss of a national identity
- Strains on welfare provision
- Compromises in national security
- The undermining of employment opportunities for long-term residents (Gallagher, 2014)

For example, an Ipsos MORI study shows a significant rise in negative perceptions of immigration, stating 'at its peak in December 2007, 46% of respondents named race relations or immigration among the most important issues' (Blinder, 2014: 4) facing British society. However, these negative attitudes are concentrated on certain migrant categories, where asylum seekers are demonized the most, compared to other types, such as, 'high-skilled migrants, students, and close family members' (Blinder, 2014: 6). Although, these public polls illustrate shifts in attitudes, Gallagher (2014) argues the public might not have accurate information or knowledge to make informed opinions. Subsequently, this could have a knock-on effect on the perception portrayed by the public, resulting in 'stereotype driven understanding of 'immigrant discourse' emerges in the media and among political elites' (p.733).

These public anxieties and insecurities are argued to be encouraged by media coverage (Guentner et al., 2016), through fear mongering and with the intention of using immigrants as scapegoats. Over the years ASRs have faced detrimental media discourse, such as 'Britain swamped by asylum seekers'; 'war on terror'; and scares like 'bogus asylum seekers scrounging welfare benefits' (Pupavac, 2008). Furthermore, terms are regularly misused, such as refugee and asylum seeker being used interchangeably, asylum seeker being presented as an 'illegal migrant', and the rise of asylum seekers in the EU often referred to as a 'migrant crisis' whereas more specifically it is a 'refugee crisis'. The misuse and negatively charged terms, exposed repeatedly by media coverage or in political debates are thought to have a significant role in shaping public opinion (Gale, 2004; Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart, 2009; Schemer, 2012).

### **Falling on the third sector?**

The discussion illustrates the additional dilemmas and uncertainties the ASR subsector may face in comparison to others. Specifically, with the current climate of Brexit and the growing refugee crisis, there is concern that rising negative immigration rhetoric will reinforce highly politicised xenophobic attitudes. If this gains public support this could heighten opinions within government to perceive migrant groups as 'other' to the mainstream population, or viewed as 'undeserving' of welfare support. Further heavy restrictions on welfare entitlements could be implemented, already evident in the current Conservative government's less receptive approach to migration and pushing this group to the edges of welfare support.

Phillimore and Goodson (2010) describe the critical role of refugee agencies in providing services as being recognised by the government, as 'the influx of ever more fragmented groups of people has led the statutory sector to rely heavily upon community organisations, such as refugee community organisations (RCOs), for intelligence about changing populations and welfare needs' (p.182). They further argue that these agencies have received little support from the government, with insufficient financial support, and often rely on 'seed corn' funding. This lack of support has become particularly salient as the agencies are facing increasing demands from service users, due to further restrictive welfare entitlements and austerity cuts creating disproportionate squeezes on the sector (Hill, 2011), developing huge pressures within the organisations' operating environment. Where once the government may have outsourced services to the third sector due to recognizing its advantageous features in addressing the needs of ASR communities, commentators argue the government has become increasingly exploitative of the sector's sense of responsibility to support those disadvantaged within society (Sales, 2007; Wren, 2007), with the sector providing the bulk of welfare support without the appropriate financial support.

### **1.3. Research aims and research questions**

This thesis is based on an investigation into the various exogenous factors within the contextual environment that are shaping TSOs and influencing the provision of services accessible to ASRs. To unpack how the challenging operating environment influences TSOs, and explore the diversity of how organisations navigate and respond to such factors, case studies of three ASR TSOs were conducted using a qualitative research

strategy. An ethnographic rationale was adopted for gathering the data, which meant using a mixed methods approach (interviews, observation, and document analysis), spending time immersed within the organisations, and a process of reflexivity. The research is a case study of third sector organisational change applying a multi-level perspective, which aims to understand how changes in organisational form are influenced by exogenous pressures, institutional forces, and individual agency.

The thesis aims to address the following research questions to address gaps in knowledge (see Chapter Three for a detailed outline).

**Primary research question:**

*How and why are formal local asylum seeker and refugee third sector organisations reshaping service delivery in response to external pressures?*

**Secondary research questions:**

- 1) How are internal organisational developments being influenced by the wider systems of the contextual environment the organisations are operating within?*
- 2) What changes have been made to organisational forms?*
- 3) How do organisations develop their external appearances? Is this contradictory to the organisational form?*
- 4) How have organisations' funding strategies changed and how has this shaped the service delivery of organisations?*
- 5) What dynamics within organisations are influential on organisational processes?*

By answering these secondary questions and corroborating the collected data this provides a full account of the phenomenon (Butler-kisber, 2010). These research questions have underpinned the thesis structure and influenced the selection of research methods to gather the relevant data.

#### **1.4. Thesis structure**

This thesis is organised into nine chapters. Chapters One to Three unpack the contextual environment of the research topic, exploring different aspects of the operating environment for TSOs. This provides the backdrop for the empirical findings discussed further on. Chapter Two concentrates on the changing policy terrain, such as, the shifts in government approach towards the third sector and changes in types of support provided. The multifaceted funding environment for the third sector will be discussed, including: the opening up of public services, the changing nature of funding relationships, range of income streams used, and effects of austerity measures. Lastly, the chapter will focus explicitly on UK immigration policy, by providing descriptive figures on ASRs in the UK, the different types of support provided, and how the refocus of service provision has reflected the shifts in policies.

Chapter Three provides a review of relevant literature. This is divided into two parts, firstly, by discussing wider debates within third sector literature on organisational change, secondly, by narrowing the focus to ASR third sector literature. The first section used a broad approach to scope literature from across subsectors due to the ASR third sector literature being underdeveloped. The review has framed and conceptualised the research



problem, by unpacking the concept of organisational change into four broad themes, Context, Form, Activities and Dynamics. . 'Context' provides various arguments on the existence of the third sector, generally related to the relationship it has with the other sectors. 'Form' demonstrates the diversity of the sector and provides debates on various perspectives on changing organisational form. 'Activities' demonstrates TSOs being pushed to deliver public services in this competitive funding environment, and outlines various debates on the effect of contracting out public services, including, mission drift, accountability, and autonomy. 'Dynamics' is used as a synonym for 'looking inside' organisations and focusing on the internal processes, relationships and practices. Examples of governance, leadership and work environment are used to distinguish how organisational change occurs and to understand diversity in organisational behaviour. This thesis stresses TSOs should not be viewed as passive agents delivering public services (Mullins and Acheson, 2014), but instead claims that sectoral relationships have been based on interdependence. The four themes have generated important issues that require further exploration and have informed the secondary research questions.

The second part of Chapter Three discusses how the ASR third sector was established in response to changing policy i.e. the introduction of the dispersal programme across the UK. A wide perspective of the refugee sector will be outlined, highlighting gaps in the literature this thesis aims to address e.g. researching formal local refugee organisations. The chapter argues that organisational change in ASR TSOs is only partially explained within the literature and particularly lacking in more recent developments. Lastly, the

primary research question is distinguished and the contribution this thesis will make to ASR third sector literature, outlined.

Chapter Four describes the underpinning analytical framework that is used to understand and explore the descriptions of empirical findings in the latter chapters. Following my epistemological perspective discussed in Chapter Five, this thesis has undertaken a multi-layered perspective to explore organisational settings and understand organisational change. This thesis argues that one theoretical approach is not robust enough to fully explain the different layers identified, therefore, principles from several theoretical approaches have been applied. This chapter discusses principles from institutional theory, including institutional isomorphism, institutional logics, institutional work, emotion work, and also draws on concepts from hybridisation (also discussed in the section on 'Form'). This chapter argues that by using a multi-layered analytical framework it creates an insightful account of the phenomenon adding to the validity and credibility of the research.

Chapter Five outlines the methodological approach. First, the researcher's interpretivist perspective will be highlighted to demonstrate the approach used to conduct the research. A case study research strategy was used to investigate in-depth organisational change in ASR TSOs, applying some principles from the ethnographic tradition. The research design is discussed, including the practicalities of gaining access, sampling, and the rationale for selecting the research methods - interviews, ethnographic observations and

conversation, and document analysis. The chapter also provides a detailed description of the analytical process, reflexivity and ethical considerations.

The empirical findings are unpacked into three chapters that focus on different levels - macro, meso, micro - and concentrate on answering different secondary research questions. Outlined in the table below:

*Table 1.1. Outline of secondary research questions and empirical chapters*

Secondary research question	Empirical chapter and relevant data
1) <i>How are internal organizational developments being influenced by the wider systems of the contextual environment the organisations are operating within?</i>	Chapter Six explores the exogenous pressures within the wider environment.
2) <i>What changes have been made to organisational forms?</i>	Chapter Seven discusses the empirical findings at an organisational level by exploring in-depth changes to organisational form.
3) <i>How do organisations develop their external appearances? Is this contradictory to the organisational form?</i>	Chapter Six explores the varying strategic responses to negative immigration rhetoric, and how the case studies are not completely externally transparent about their services due to concern about attracting negative attention and the risk of being discriminated against.
4) <i>How have organisations' funding strategies changed and how has this shaped the service delivery of organisations?</i>	Chapter Six explores the funding climate answering the former part of the secondary question, providing the foundations to understand how the case studies' funding strategies have changed due to various pressures in the environment.  Chapter Seven answers the latter part of the question by looking at shifting service provision.
5) <i>What dynamics within organisations are influential on organisational processes?</i>	Chapter Seven explores the processes, systems and relationships involved in organisational change  Chapter Eight focuses on providing nuanced accounts grounded in empirical data on the micro-level analysis

Chapter Six unpacks the case studies' experiences of the rise in negative immigration rhetoric, stirring up feelings of prejudice, racism and hostility within society, and the effect

this can have on the organisations accessing financial support and a decline in the sector's voice. The chapter will outline the organisations varying strategic responses. Following this the chapter will explore the funding climate and how the case studies' funding strategies have changed due to various pressures in the environment. Lastly, the chapter will illustrate the different stories told by the case studies on state-third sector relationships, and how the nature of the relationships has been maintained and shifted over the years. This section will demonstrate how the exogenous pressures are embedded within the economic crisis, and create a knock-on effect on the case studies.

Chapter Seven discusses the empirical findings at an organisational level. Firstly, it considers the strategies of organisational adaptation, and secondly, it examines the empirical evidence demonstrating organisational change. The organisation-level strategies (including mission flexibility, shifting service provision, diversification of resources) demonstrate agency and flexibility in negotiating the challenging environment, and how the strategies have been interpreted differently by the actors creating varying organisational behaviour. The second section explores the intra-organisational dimensions of organisational change, looking at change as a process that involves different stages and varying dynamics that can result in different organisational responses. Although, a degree of homogenisation will be demonstrated across the case studies, organisational agency will be highlighted through two examples, organisational culture and internal governance. The section will go on to demonstrate that by the organisations drawing on different institutional logics this creates contrasting

organisational behaviour, explaining why the organisations develop varying forms, shapes and sizes.

Chapter Eight provides nuanced accounts grounded in empirical data on the micro-level. The chapter unpacks various forms of actors and agency, arguing the powerful force of leadership as institutional work through the mechanisms of networking and story-telling. The chapter describes how work conditions have declined due to work intensification, job insecurity and emotional burden, arguing these issues need to be addressed to prevent 'burn out' or adversely affecting the quality of service provision. This empirical evidence is used to demonstrate the strength of collective action as institutional work in response to the conditions. The chapter will stress the role of emotions and values in understanding the underpinnings of institutional work, in this case the role they play in maintaining and evoking work commitment and a strong work ethos.

Chapter Nine provides the conclusion to the thesis. It uses the themes introduced in Chapter Three - Form, Activities, Dynamics, Context - to recap on the main findings and illustrate the various contributions the thesis has made to the literature. The chapter also discusses reflections on the study, where it could be developed, and identifies several potential future research projects that would complement and expand on the findings presented here.

## **CHAPTER TWO. POLICY TERRAIN**

This chapter describes the policy context in England and is divided into four broad areas shaping the operating environment for ASR TSOs. This includes three areas which look at the historical development and scope of third sector policy; changes in government approaches to the third sector; third sector involvement in delivering public services; and how the economic crisis and austerity measures are used as policy tools. The fourth area focuses on the key changes in UK immigration policies. These policy trends will be explored to determine the current situation for ASRs accessing support and welfare provision.

### **2.1 Changes in government approach to the third sector**

There has been a long history of third sector involvement in the pluralism of welfare provision, which has been well-documented by a number of academics tracking changes in engagement and development of the third sector policy environment (Harris, 2010; Lewis; 2005). The highlighted 'pinnacle point' changing the nature of the third sector policy environment was during the New Labour's administration of 1997-2010 (Lewis, 2005; Kendall, 2009). During this period the Labour government championed the distinctive characteristics of the third sector and promoted it as a 'Third Way' (Giddens, 1998) between the state and market to deliver welfare services. Previously, the third sector held a marginalised position in policy development, however, during this government administration, as Kendall (2009) describes, there was 'hyperactive mainstreaming' of the third sector in public policy. It is this backdrop that is used to

compare the changes in policy and practice since the Conservative-led Coalition government was created and came into power in May 2010.

### **2.1.1. 'Hyperactive mainstreaming'**

The hyperactivity in third sector policy development has influenced a significant transformation of the sector's landscape, primarily by the growth of the sector and its changing shape and size. Parallel to the rise in third sector profile and positive recognition by the Labour government, policy changes encouraged third sector involvement in public service delivery. The Labour government recognised the advantageous features of the third sector, therefore its policies were committed to encouraging the third sector as a key player in the mixed economy of welfare provision, with a role in civic engagement and promoting citizenship (Alcock, 2012). To encourage this development the government provided both financial assistance and support services. Financially, the increase in government funding has been one factor that explains the growth of the third sector over the years, which has come about from the government pushing the third sector towards being contracted to deliver public services (see section 2.2. for further discussion).

To enhance the third sector role in delivering public services a range of support programmes were established, such as, Futurebuilders and the ChangeUp programme. These programmes provided a combination of funding and training to develop the capacity and skills of TSOs. Futurebuilders explicitly focused on supporting organisations to compete in the new contract environment and expand service provision, whilst ChangeUp took a more generic approach to supporting the sector as a whole. Kendall

(2009) described these approaches as 'horizontal' support due to being implemented across the various subsectors that comprise the third sector. These contrast to previous government support, mainly provided through 'vertical' strands targeted at particular subsectors and activities (Kendall, 2003). Of particular relevance was the establishment of the Office of the Third Sector (OTS) in 2006, which has been noted as a significant development in third sector policy engagement, as it 'undertook strategic responsibility for developing and implementing third sector policy across government and for engaging with third sector agencies' (Alcock et al., 2012: 351).

This process of hyperactivity was meant to mainstream the third sector as a key player in the mixed economy of welfare, and fundamentally shift the welfare mix dynamics to create an equal playing field. Part of the commitment to the 'Third Way' was the government pushing for a partnership approach between the sectors in delivering public services. In 1998, the Labour government and third sector representatives agreed on a 'Compact' that formed the basis of the relationship, to formalise and promote equality between the sectors, and to build a fair environment for the third sector to compete within against the private sector (Zimmeck, 2010). Following this, local compacts were constructed between the third sector and local authorities, albeit how these were formed and implemented could vary by local authority (Craig et al., 2002). This built a third sector policy environment that was supportive and encouraging to the growth and advance of TSOs, changing the shape of the third sector landscape, and hence why this is viewed as a pivotal point in policy and practice. This shift was also welcomed as the third sector 'in



effect was moulded into a 'strategic unity' to engage with government and take advantage of the widespread support on offer' (Alcock et al., 2012: 348).

### **2.1.2. The 'new' public sector agenda**

The creation of the Coalition government in 2010 emphasised the notion of the 'Big Society' that had been developed in the previous year. When Prime Minister David Cameron publically spoke of the underlying principles of this policy agenda it seemed to mirror the previous government's ideologies, with its emphasis on volunteering and giving, outsourcing public services, support for community organisations and engaging with citizens (Alcock et al., 2012). Even the role of the OTS continued during the administration, although after the Coalition rejected the term 'third sector' and replaced it with 'civil society', it was rebranded as the Office for Civil Society (OCS). It is arguable this government followed similar policy rhetoric to its predecessor, ultimately implementing similar programmes and funds e.g. the Big Society Capital Fund. However, where the Coalition contrasted was by arguing that the 'Big Society' counter posed the notion of 'Big Government', critiquing the role of the state in tackling social issues, and even stressing its input in forming a 'broken society'. However, since this new policy approach there has been controversy about what the 'Big Society' actually entails, whether it has ever been fully implemented, and its association with austerity measures and reduced services (Baines et al., 2011).

Some commentators describe the Coalition as creating an era of a 'new' public sector agenda (Milbourne and Cushman, 2015), which did not share similar ideas of continuing partnership relations with the third sector, and subsequently, reshaping policy and practice. In Macmillan's (2011) analysis of the Coalition government's White Paper 'Supporting a Stronger Civil Society', he found 'it is clear that the government has a particular kind of agenda in mind for civil society organisations. They need to be more efficient, entrepreneurial and, crucially, less dependent on the state' (p.119). Briefly, the White Paper described civil society as fragile and too dependent on public funding, therefore, the government was required to assist in supporting and strengthening the civil society (ibid). Although, the White Paper reflected a positive discourse on the role of the third sector and its beneficial input into society, how the sector has been supported by the government has changed significantly by administration (Macmillan, 2011; 2013b). For example, the Coalition government was 'not prepared to invest to the same extent or in the same ways as previous governments, and this is couched partly in terms of necessity: the demands of deficit reduction are used to outweigh other considerations' (Macmillan, 2013b: 199). Consequently, budget cuts were implemented across the third sector in a range of ways, such as, less public funding for services, major cuts or closure to horizontal support programmes, and the OCS had its third sector fund cut over three years (Alcock, 2012), demonstrating the breadth of impact on the sector.

The Compact continued during the Coalition administration (although in a simplified form), however it is argued a 'paradigm shift' occurred in the state-third sector relationship. Previously, it has been described as based on interdependence and a partnership ethos,

to what Macmillan (2013b) refers to as an emergent 'trial separation'. Macmillan claims the effect of decoupling of the state and third sector will vary by different parts of the sector as 'we may be witnessing a shift in relative emphasis from 'horizontal' to 'vertical' relationships, with the third sector seen less as a whole but through particular service delivery and activity fields: employment services, community development, health and so on' (Macmillan, 2013b: 200). This example demonstrates how changes in policy may result in differing experiences for subsectors and the need for more research on particular policy fields.

## **2.2. Open public services**

This shift towards welfare pluralism and outsourcing public services to the third sector is not a new phenomenon and its history has been well-documented (see Macmillan, 2010; Rees and Mullins, 2016). It is the nature of these changes that is the focus of this section. Briefly, the welfare mix shift was spurred from the early 1990s, when the then Conservative government changed its approach to the provision of social welfare services, specifically by purchasing social care and health services from the third and private sectors. Justified by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of service provision the state encouraged a competitive environment, which, it was thought, would increase the quality of the services and create greater choice for service users. Therefore, a process of contracting out was used to promote a market-focused approach, and for organisations to respond competitively (Bartlett et al., 1998). Again, contracting is not a new arrangement between the state and third sector, but this period showed signs of

acceleration in this funding approach and 'contract culture'. This was also fuelled by the government pushing for TSOs to adopt more managerial behaviours (Harris, 2001).

The subsequent Labour administration was also keen for the third sector to have a wider role in delivering public services, beyond social services and health to other policy fields and subsectors (Cunningham and James, 2009). For example, there was a shift from perceiving the third sector as providing additional or supplementary services (Lewis, 1999), to being an alternative to the state (Lewis, 2005). More recently the government has viewed the third sector as a primary supplier of public services to undertake government contracts (HM Treasury, 2002), which for some organisations has created a new era of partnership relations with the state. Other than being a means to reduce public expenditure costs, the third sector was valued by the Labour government to deliver public service contracts for various other reasons - for example: the third sector was well-known for being respected and trusted by the public; having specialist expertise and knowledge on certain service users and locations; and the value driven dimension of TSOs meant the organisational focus was perceived to be on providing quality services rather than making profit (HM Treasury, 2002; Haugh and Kitson, 2007; Bennett, 2008).

In turn this opened up a new income stream for the sector that explains its growth over these years. The Labour government's move away from grants towards favouring more contractual arrangements has been fundamental in the shaping of the sector and been subjected to debate (Wilding, 2010). The annual Civil Society Almanac produced by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) (which draws on data from across

the UK collected by the Charity Commission), demonstrates this shift in the last decade. In 2003/04 there was a peak in the government giving grants to the third sector, reaching £6.1 billion (Crees et al., 2016), whereas by 2013/14 government grants had fallen to £2.8 billion (19% of the third sector's total income from the government), and earned contracts or fees from the government had risen to £12 billion (81% of third sector total income).

Although, contracting relationships are not a new funding phenomenon between the state and third sector, the increasing scope and breadth of these relationships for some organisations brought new ways of working. The third sector was also motivated towards this shift, given the perception that contractual arrangements would move organisations away from grant dependency, to more substantial and longer-term funding arrangements that would promote financial stability. Plus, some organisations were keen to form a closer working relationship with the government. As a consequence of these new types of funding arrangements, the Almanac (NVCO, 2016) highlights that in 2013/14 over a third (34%) of third sector total income came from government funds, stemming from a range of government bodies and consisting of both grants and contracts. Whilst this appears to be an encouraging progression in third sector development, with a rise in overall income that has fuelled the growth and advance of the sector, commentators have argued this has placed the third sector in a vulnerable position by TSOs becoming too dependent on public funds (Milbourne and Cushman, 2015).

### **2.2.1. Accentuated commissioning environment**

Although there has been a withdrawal of attention and support in the development of third sector policy by the Coalition, government discourse and policy has continued to promote and expand outsourcing of public services, with more encouragement for all types of providers to compete for contracts. The Coalition government no longer championed the third sector as the 'Third Way', but instead the Open Public Services White Paper (HM Government, 2011) promoted a much more competitive market-like commissioning model for private and third sectors to compete within. There was an intention of driving costs down (and shrinking back the state); improving organisational efficiency; and encouraging better quality service delivery through 'outcome-based commissioning' (Rees, 2014). Even though there is limited evidence on whether this move to outsourcing public services has improved the quality of service provision (Macmillan, 2010; Hogg and Baines, 2011), the government was intent on shifting the responsibility for welfare provision mainly on to private agencies as primary suppliers rather than promoting an equal playing field with the third sector. The Coalition government also implemented the Localism agenda that promoted 'new rights for communities and public sector employees to take on the provision of local services where they believed that they could do so differently or better' (Hunter et al., 2016: 23), further demonstrating the government's intention to open up public services.

Alongside this, the Coalition government faced challenging times from the recent financial crisis and focused on eliminating the government deficit during its administration. The 'Big Society' notion is arguably driven by the government wanting to realign the responsibilities

between the state, civil society, and individuals due to the belief that civil society had become too weak and dependent. Therefore, the Coalition put a squeeze on resources, shifting priorities to market-like principles and, in some cases, viewing the private sector as the answer. This shift in priorities is apparent in 'Open Public Services' emphasising the increasing role of commissioning as a strategic tool for public service delivery, opening up the service delivery landscape, and encouraging diversity and choice in the provision of public services. This emphasis on outsourcing public services and commissioning arrangements is not a new phenomenon but rather this 'interpretation of commissioning is an intensification of existing trends in this relationship, with increased emphasis on the market mechanism, competition and market-making' (Rees, 2014: 59).

These changes in the public service delivery landscape since the emergence of the Coalition and then the election of the Conservative government in 2015 have not yet received the same attention within the literature as the 'hyperactive mainstreaming' during the Labour administration. Even so, there are a number of funding models that have been recognized (although not necessarily new) as being accentuated since these shifts in administration, such as, outcomes-based commissioning, payment by results and prime contracting models, which could have significant effects on the third sector landscape. For example, the prime contracting models will be discussed in the empirical chapters, which focus on the 'scaling up' and 'rolling out' of contracts. It is argued commissioners are increasingly tendering one contract with the intention for it to be managed by a prime provider, covering a larger geographical area, reducing cost and contact time. However, this model is criticised for favouring large private agencies by the aspects of the contract

and tender specifications arguably to the detriment of smaller and locally-based organisations (LBF, 2016). Smaller organisations are subcontracted to deliver the services, described as being used as ‘bid candy’, and creating a long supply chain that has the effect of directing risk away from government (Benson, 2014; Hunter et al., 2016).

These new funding models demonstrate a strong preference for large established private agencies and an emphasis on a market-like competitive environment. It is often those organisations that already have the appropriate skills, capacity and resources to compete successfully, which have been able successfully to adapt and show resilience to this new competitive environment. The changing funding environment has also created challenging conditions, particularly for small and medium-sized organisations, which are in danger of fuelling polarisation within the sector. Smaller organisations struggle throughout the commissioning process due to a number of barriers - ‘limited pre-procurement dialogue, disproportionate bidding and reporting requirements, short timescales, prioritising cheapest price and the transition from grants to contracts can all prevent smaller voluntary organisations from engaging and commissioners from achieving value for money’ (Crees et al., 2016). Further challenges come from reduced resources, struggles to access certain government funding, and a predicted increase in demand due to welfare reform, rising unemployment (Hunter et al., 2016), reduced state services and changes in population demographics (LBF, 2015). This may result in a decline in small and medium-sized organisations that will be to the detriment of the sector and loss of essential local knowledge and expertise (Milbourne, 2013; LBF, 2017). Fundamentally, this could drive down the quality of service provision, and primarily impact



on the most disadvantaged social groups that are already marginalized from mainstream services.

It is fundamental that more research is conducted on the challenges faced by small and medium-sized organisations due to them forming the bulk of the sector. The sector is diverse in organisational shapes and sizes, geographical locations, and in how income is distributed across the sector, which means the sector does not experience the multiple, pressing and challenging exogenous pressures in a homogenous way. For example, in relation to the financial downturn the NCVO (2016) reveals that small and medium-sized organisations did not recover income lost from government since 2009/10. Crees et al. (2016) study on small and medium organisations supports this claim, describing ‘most income bands lost government income and increased their income from individuals between 2008/09 and 2012/13...the smaller the organisation, the greater the proportional loss of income from government, and the larger the organisation the greater the increase in income from individuals’ (p.23). They further expand ‘the exceptions were the smallest income band (£25k–£100k), which decreased both government and individual income sources, and the largest income band (over £100m) which increased both government and individual income sources’ (p.23). Another way of looking at this is TSOs ‘with an income of £100,000 or less make up 83% of the sector in terms of the number of charities, but account for less than 5% of the total income. A similar pattern is seen with expenditure and assets’ (NCVO, 2016). The current Almanac demonstrates the vast variation in how the sector’s income is dispersed across the sector, mainly disproportionately to larger organisations adding to the debate on polarisation.

### **2.3. Funding landscape and austerity measures**

The economic downturn in 2007, and austerity measures arguably being played out through a reduction in budget spending, has been fundamental in creating a turbulent operating environment for the third sector. In particular, the Coalition government's first Comprehensive Spending Review in 2010 outlined major deficit reduction strategies to drastically reduce government spending, with the intention of tackling these issues in one administration. The Almanac (NCVO, 2016) reveals that there was a peak in third sector total income in 2007/08 of £43.2 billion, which fell to £41.6 billion in 2008/09, and has continued to be fairly stable to the rise of £43.8 billion in 2013/14. When unpacked this drop in income between 2007/08 and 2008/09, and once inflation is taken into account, can be associated with the significant decline in government income, which was noted to have the largest drop across the funding sources. The Almanac demonstrates that up until 2009/10 income from the government grew to a peak of £15.6 billion, and in the following years this income has been shown to decline, with its lowest at £14.5 billion in 2012/13. However, it is important not to overstate the effect of the reduction in government funding on the sector. As on closer inspection it shows there was then £0.5 billion rise and therefore the decline was the lesser sum of £600 million from the peak in 2009/10 (NCVO, 2016). In the bigger scheme of things this drop in overall income may not be as detrimental as first thought, especially as the income grew and continues to make a substantial contribution to the sector's resources.

The financial crisis and austerity have been played out through various policy measures that have made resources more stringent, placed a squeeze on organisational capacity, whilst coupled with a rise in demand for their services (Wilding, 2010; NCVO, 2015). Even though there is still a commitment from the government for the third sector to meet this rising demand and deliver public services, this has not been met with the same enthusiasm to increase public funding nor is overall third sector income growing at the same pace as the economic recovery (NCVO, 2015). However, when exploring the changes in the sector's income the financial crisis provides only one explanation, a fuller account is understanding how the government has used austerity as a means to play out policy measures targeted at those seen as undeserving.

Public expenditure cutbacks are not experienced homogenously across the sector, as Clifford et al. (2013) demonstrate that not all TSOs receive government funding, either centrally or locally, finding that 36% of TSOs had received public funding in 2008, and only a minority (14%) of these were dependent- it is their main income revenue- on public funding. The study uses data from the 2008 National Survey of Third Sector Organisations (NSTSO) and reveals organisations that target the most disadvantaged within society are more likely to receive public funding than organisations targeting other groups, and more likely to be operating in areas that have high levels of deprivation. With public expenditure cutbacks hitting across the UK, and disproportionately targeted at the most deprived areas, the research indicates that certain types of organisation are more likely to be affected by cuts: organisations providing services to the most at need within

the community (Clifford et al., 2013). Furthermore, the effects of cutbacks also vary by the speed they are implemented, the faster they are implemented the more detrimental.

### **2.3.1. Alternative income revenue**

As demonstrated, austerity is being experienced unevenly across the sector and the full picture is still unclear as more cutbacks are on the horizon. An additional factor is the diversification of revenue TSOs obtain, such as from, charitable trusts, donations, generated income and fundraising. In 2013/14 the major source of income for the third sector came from individuals (including donations and legacies) consisting of £19 billion and forming 44% of the sectors total income (Crees et al., 2016). Unlike government income, this source of income continued to rise during the period of economic downturn and austerity measures. Even in the face of household income being squeezed there has still been a significant increase of £2.3 billion from individual giving to the voluntary sector in the last 5 years (NCVO, 2015), and reaching an all-time peak in 2013/14 by rising in £1 billion in just one year. This funding source is viewed as advantageous for being unrestricted funding, without strict requirements or criteria on how the funds should be used, which is particularly favourable to support services that are challenging to fund or to contribute to overall running costs. As previously demonstrated larger organisations access the majority of income from government sources, and smaller organisations are at a major disadvantage to compete in the market-like environment, therefore fundraising is seen as an important resource for such organisations. Crees et al. (2016) state ‘income from individuals makes up a similar share of overall income for medium to super-major

organisations (43%-44%) whilst it makes up a much larger share for small and micro organisations (56% and 70% respectively)'.

A disadvantage of fundraising is the capacity, professional skills and considerable amount of resources required to generate income, which again appears to favour certain established organisations and disadvantage smaller organisations. However organisations may invest substantial resources into fundraising, but if there is a lack of positive public perception towards the social purpose it could result in little return. To sustain this high level of income from individuals there needs to be a feeling of trust and confidence by the public towards the third sector, which is often based on the view TSOs are value-driven and committed to their missions (Yang et al., 2016). This explains why individuals often trustingly believe that donations will be spent appropriately with limited understanding on how organisations actually use their resources (NVCO, 2011).

There has been recent concern over the growing negative attitude from the public towards the sector on issues, such as, campaigning, fundraising and chief executive officer salaries. There has recently been a rise in negative media coverage of charities that could have a damaging impact on the sector's reputation with the public. One recent example is the negative media coverage over the reported mismanagement of the children's charity Kids Company, and fears this will have a knock on effect on how the wider sector is perceived (Cook, 2015). A recent survey by YouGov (Gunstone, 2015) further supports this concern by reporting how the third sector's reputation has been damaged, which is

demonstrated by an overall decline in respondents perceiving the third sector as trustworthy. A study by nfpSynergy (2015) claims that public trust in the sector is at an all-time low since 2007. This raises concern on the impact this can have on the sector's relationship with potential donors, and even though most of these concerns are directed at larger charities this can still have a potential knock on effect on smaller organisations (NCVO, 2015).

## **2.4. UK immigration policy**

The last section focuses on changes in UK immigration policy. It will not provide an extensive overview of the UK immigration policy context, instead the focus is on how changes in immigration policy have influenced and shaped a response from the third sector. Firstly, the ASR group will be described, to illustrate the growing population that are seeking welfare support in the UK. Secondly, the section will describe how the group navigates increasingly hostile immigration policy that is pushing this group to the edges of welfare support due to continuing 'welfare chauvinism'. It will be argued that in more recent years these changes in policy have produced significant gaps in welfare provision for this group, creating rising need to support even the most basic human entitlements i.e. food, clothes, shelter. This has spurred some TSOs to fill this gap in welfare support, and encouraged a more formalised and organised response by the third sector to continue to meet this rising need, particularly in the face of the current government's less receptive approach to immigration. For a more detailed discussion on the emergence of the ASR third sector refer to the latter part of Chapter Three.

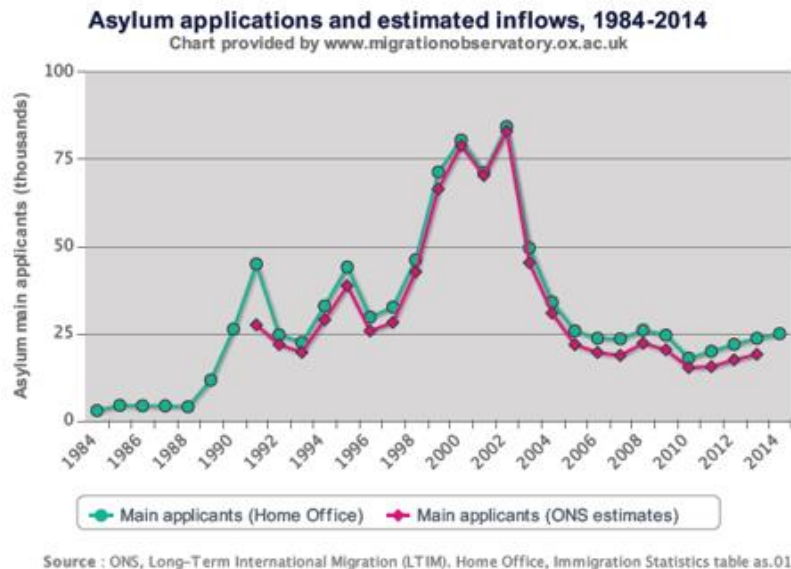
### **2.4.1. Asylum and refugee figures**

Migration to the UK has occurred in several key stages, firstly, immigration from the Commonwealth countries during the 1950s to 1980s. Secondly, the UK signed the 1951 UN Geneva Convention to be a host country for those seeking asylum as a result of fleeing persecution in their home countries. Thirdly, in more recent years the opening of EU borders for free movement of labour, particularly in the case of the A2 and A8 countries, has seen a substantial influx of EU migrants that has also contributed to this migration 'mix' and expansion to the UK (Katwala and Somerville, 2016). For a detailed account on the history of migration in the UK refer to Sales (2002) and Randall (2015). This section will concentrate on shifting policy in regard to ASRs due to this group being the main focus of the case studies, although in recent years the organisations' broadened the remit to include Eastern European migrants.

Prior to the late 1980s, asylum applications within the UK were estimated at a steady 4,000 every year, for around 40 years (Home Office, 1998). During this time asylum policy was fairly welcoming and generous to new asylum seekers entering the UK, allowing similar rights to those of UK citizens to access mainstream welfare cash benefits and to enter paid employment (Carey-wood, 1997). However, by 1991 the number of asylum applications rapidly rose to 44,800 (Home Office, 1992), and 44% of these asylum claims were granted leave to remain. The fluctuation in numbers since has been a response of varying civil conflicts, such as, the break-up of the Soviet Union resulting in thousands of asylum seekers coming to the UK (Schierup et al., 2006), the civil war in Somalia and

oppression in Iraq. The asylum figure peaked at 84,130 in 2002, however, in recent years it has been a relatively consistent figure of around 24,000 - 24,914 in 2014 (Blinder, 2015).

Figure 1.1. Changes in asylum application figures from 1984 -2014



The above figure (taken from Blinder, 2015) outlines the changes in asylum applications claimed in the UK from 1984-2014. In 2015, there was a rise in asylum claims to 38,378 and in mid-2015 the UK was ranked in seventh position within the EU for receiving new asylum applications (UNCHR (mid-trends), 2015). It is challenging to construct exact figures on refugees (asylum seekers that have been granted leave to remain) residing within the UK due to movement across EU countries. The UNCHR estimates that the refugee population in the UK consists of '117,234 refugees, 37,829 pending asylum cases and 16 stateless persons' (UNCHR, 2015). These figures demonstrate that refugees form approximately 0.4% of the UK population, in contrast to public perceptions which overestimate the scale of asylum, as 'almost four out of ten people believe that



more than 10% of the population are refugees' (British Future, 2013). Even though the UK has refused to be part of an EU refugee resettlement program and relocation scheme, the UK has agreed to accept an additional 20,000 Syrian refugees by 2020 (Katwala and Somerville, 2016: 13) again demonstrating the growing asylum seeker population in the UK and continuing demand for appropriate welfare support for this group.

#### **2.4.2. Key changes to UK immigration legislation and policy**

The table below outlines the key changes in UK immigration legislation and policy from 1948-2014, and how these relate to net figures of migrants coming to the UK. The key changes in immigration policy are summarised below, in order to explain the support and welfare provision for ASRs, and as the backdrop to understanding how the third sector has evolved into a key provider to support this social group.

Table 2.2. Changes to immigration policies and legislations

Date	Changes to Policy, Legislation and Figures
1948	National Assistance Act 1948 states local authorities were responsible for those that are destitute, including asylum seekers. This means service provision is the duty of social services.
1954	UN Geneva Convention refers to the rights and protections of those fleeing countries of origin as a consequence of persecution
1960-1988	Five major Acts of Parliament that implemented control procedures and legally defining the distinctions and entitlements between those that are British born or those who have a UK passport, and enforced restrictions on the entitlement of citizens of former colonies to settle in the UK (Randall, 2015)
1985	Numbers entering the UK exceed numbers emigrating for the first time (Randall, 2015)
1987	4,256 asylum applications in the UK (Blinder, 2015)
1991	44,800 asylum applications in the UK (Home Office, 1992)
1993	Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993 was the first act dealing specifically with asylum, it focused on controlling the entry of this group
1996	Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 restricted the social rights of asylum seekers by removing the welfare benefits from those claiming asylum in-country (after entering the UK), and from those appealing a decision.
1998	Human Rights Act 1998 enforced the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law, this meant Human Rights were now seen as a 'higher law'
1999	Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 was a key change in asylum policy: more rights given to search and arrest asylum seekers, more emphasis on detention centres, increasing move towards providing vouchers than cash support, establishment of centralised agency National Asylum Support Service (NASS), and no-choice dispersal of asylum seekers across the UK.
2002	Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 increased restrictions on asylum, removing entitlement to NASS support for in country asylum seekers, and rights to enforcement. Increasing rights for economic migrants, visas provided for highly skilled workers with no job offer.
2002	Asylum applicants in UK peak at 84, 130 (Blinder, 2015)
2004	Asylum and Immigration Act increase restrictions on rights of asylum appeal
2004	A8 citizens entitled to work in UK under Workers Registration Scheme (Randall, 2015)
2007	A23 citizens permitted to work in UK under severe restrictions (Randall, 2015)
2008	In 2008 it was estimated that approximately 500,000 Eastern Europeans were working in the UK (ONS, 2008)
2014	Immigration Act 2014 enforced new requirements for landlords to check immigration status, promoted ease to deport migrant, higher fines for employers of 'irregular' migrants and bringing in surcharges to access the NHS and benefits
2016	Referendum on membership of the European Union

Although the table illustrates a long history of migration to the UK, migration has been viewed as a temporary issue within policy (Sales, 2002). The relatively low numbers of asylum claims in the 1980s explains entitlements and provision for ASRs being fairly similar to UK citizens' i.e. same entitlements to enter paid employment, social security, and housing. However, when New Labour came into power in 1997, the asylum application process and system was in disarray, with a substantial backlog of

approximately 50,000 applications waiting for a decision on their asylum claims. Consequentially, the Labour Government produced a review on the whole asylum system called '*Fairer, Faster and Firmer- a Modern Approach to Immigration and Asylum*' (1998), which has been the main body of work that informed subsequent policy papers and legislation on ASR issues. What is noticeable in this rapid growth in policy is the often contradictory viewpoints played out.

In regard to asylum seekers, policy changes were two fold. Firstly, a restrictive stance was taken, such as, stricter limits on appealing asylum decisions, terminating all mainstream welfare support for asylum seekers who applied in-country or were in the process of appeal, and enforcing stricter sanctions on employers found paying asylum seekers with no status. Only asylum seekers that applied at the port of entry were entitled to access support from the government, which resulted in an increase in destitute asylum seekers within the UK. Secondly, policy changes were focused on measures that acted as a deterrent, such as, asylum seekers did not have any rights to access paid employment or social security; were given food vouchers rather than any cash payments; accommodation was provided on a no-choice basis across different areas in the UK; and tighter pre-entry controls were introduced at the borders. Although, the government argued the UK would provide a 'safety net' to limit asylum seekers becoming destitute, any support given was viewed as a last resort after seeking help from friends, family and community groups.

Not only were these policy changes encouraging the misconception of asylum seekers being 'bogus' and 'undeserving' of support (Sales, 2002), but these changes also fuelled the perception that asylum seekers were dependent on welfare due to refusing access to legally authorized work. In contrast, a separate strand of policy changes focused on refugee integration. As Sales (2002) points out refugees are viewed in comparison to other immigrants as 'deserving' due to being proven by the Convention as legitimate asylum seekers. Developments on refugee integration were introduced through Home Office White Papers, *Full and Equal Citizens* (2000), *Secure Borders, Safe Haven* (2002) and *Integration Matters* (2005). When asylum seekers were granted refugee status different welfare and employment rights were given, demonstrated through other services and funding provided by the government that focused on integration, such as, the Refugee Challenge Fund, later replaced by Refugee Integration and Employment Support (RIES) (Phillimore, 2012). This promoted a supportive environment for refugees, in comparison to other asylum seekers that were subjected to unsympathetic and stringent measures, and further disadvantaged by not being included into the integration process until granted status. This demonstrates how the government disaggregates various forms of migrant status and uses this to discriminate against those that do not have full citizenship (Guentner et al., 2016).

The most fundamental development of immigration policy in regard to shifts in mainstream welfare support, and subsequently the expanding involvement of the third sector supporting asylum seekers, was from legislation in 1999. The introduction of the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act showed a significant shift in how the government

perceived resettlement and support for asylum seekers within the UK (Piacentini, 2012). Changes were made to the social rights of asylum seekers to differentiate them from UK citizens i.e. less welfare entitlement and the implementation of a no-choice dispersal programme across the UK. This shift can be explained as the government's response to the rapid rise in asylum claims at the time, with the intention to deter other migrants coming to the UK, particularly in regard to economic migrants. Secondly, major changes were made to the government's approach to providing welfare support and resettlement to asylum seekers, by fundamentally removing access to mainstream provision and establishing a nationally run system called the National Asylum Support Service (NASS). This was part of the UK Border Agency and aimed to provide basic services through accommodation and support, which was only accessible if strict criteria were met and individuals were still in the process of claiming asylum.

A fundamental feature that has changed the landscape of TSOs providing services to ASRs, has been the enforced dispersal of asylum seekers in need of accommodation to designated dispersal areas across the UK. Again, strict requirements have to be met by the asylum seekers to access this service, with a no-choice policy on where they will be dispersed to, often moved around the UK with little notice. The ideology behind developing dispersal areas was to move the 'burden' from the South East, and accommodate asylum seekers in cheaper housing across the UK. However, it has been argued that the dispersal programme placed asylum seekers in a further disadvantaged position by moving them away from London which has established BME communities and relevant frameworks of asylum support (Zetter, et al., 2005; McCabe et al., 2010).

Arguably these dispersal areas are selected due to low cost rather than suitability, for example asylum seekers were moved to places that lacked relevant services or support, appropriate language and cultural awareness, and they could be one of the few ethnic minorities residing in the area. These features can effect ASR integration within the community. As a consequence the lack of appropriate mainstream services to meet these needs and issues, also varying by culture and ethnicity, has resulted in the emergence of ASR organisations outside of London within these dispersal areas (see chapter three for further discussion).

Although the Labour government claimed to be focused on tackling racism and promoting multiculturalism, commentators argue that the changes made by immigration policy are rather contradictory as a result of the rapid enforcement of restrictive and deterrent measures (Guentner et al., 2016). In Guentner et al. (2016) 'xenophobic or nationalist rhetoric was driving and rationalising the evolution of migration control and chauvinist policies on migrants' access to welfare provisions' (p.6). Other contradictory immigration policy included Labour's enthusiasm for encouraging EU migrants to come and work in the UK, which Guentner et al. claim could be assumed would entitle them to equal rights, however a number of enforcements have changed entitlements as a result of significant adverse political and public debate.

In contrast, the Coalition government based its policy agenda on reducing absolute net migration; it argued that increasing migration to the UK was having a negative impact on

social cohesion and national identity. Whereas the Labour government framed the rise in economic migrants as beneficial for the country's economy, the Coalition campaign was at the time of the economic downturn and rising unemployment, which did not provide a strong backdrop to support the promotion of immigration. The perception promoted by the Coalition was that migrants were a drain on welfare benefits and provision, which they argued has had little input from migrants. Guentner et al. (2016) found that the concept of 'welfare chauvinism' has continued throughout UK welfare policy, meaning to exclude non-citizens from the right to social protection. They argue that 'governments not only respond to chauvinist views but, through laws and administrative practices, also themselves generate chauvinism, legitimising and rationalising popular anxiety about abuse of a publicly-funded system' (ibid: 3). Bringing back this notion of deserving and undeserving, they further explain that 'the constant invention of new categories of noncitizens gives a basis to chauvinistic practices which are then enmeshed in political and public discourses' (ibid: 3). What is apparent is that governments are continuously bringing in anti-immigration policy and legislation that is making the system increasingly complex to navigate, and shifting perceptions of who is viewed as deserving or not. Restricting access to the welfare system to specific migrant groups on the foundation of undeservingness has arguably turned this into a 'moralistic basis for discrimination' (ibid).

Following the discussion on austerity measures being played out through policy choices, these anti-immigration policies of reducing access to public funds are evidently echoing these principles. For example, cash support is currently set at £36.95 per person, per week, which allows just £5.28 a day for food, sanitation and clothing (UNCHR, 2015).

Furthermore, refugee programmes, such as Refugee Integration and Employment Projects (RIES), that were viewed more positively to encourage social cohesion and integration have been subjected to major cutbacks or complete closure (Hill, 2011; Refugee Action, 2011) (see section 3.5.1. for more detailed discussion). Central government funding and support is at a bare minimum, and where local authorities are faced with the statutory duty to provide support to the destitute or those with dependent child, this is done with overstretched capacity and resources.

Theresa May, at the time Home Secretary, enforced changes to The Immigration Act 2014 that were purposefully meant to make a 'hostile environment' for illegal migrants. This included:

- To make it easier to deport migrants
- Requirement on private landlords to check the immigration status of their tenants
- A reduction in the number of rights to appeal an immigration decision (17 to 4)
- Enforcements made to cut down 'health tourism' migrants who apply to stay in the UK for more than six months, by them having to pay a 'health surcharge' to the NHS

These changes were barely challenged in parliament, but these provisions are likely to impact most on those disadvantaged within society, specifically undocumented migrants. The government perceives undocumented migrants as 'undeserving', although some



undocumented migrants would be entitled to citizenship, but have fallen through the net for a number of reasons. The withdrawal of provision and creation of an increasingly hostile environment for migrants is arguably not encouraging migrants to return to their home country but instead produces a rise in hardship and cases of destitution. For example, there is concern that introduced landlord checks will increase homelessness, which is already recognised as a current policy issue (Rooney, 2014). Reducing rights to appeal (although there is a 61% success of winning), and the removal of Section 95 that provides statutory asylum support to families with children, will undoubtedly result in a rise in destitution. Randall (2015) argues that the government's intention to use destitution as a deterrent has not worked in the way the government might hope, but instead has placed migrants in further complex, precarious and disadvantaged situations (see Randall, 2015; Allsopp et al., 2014). The most recent changes in the Immigration Bill (2016) continues the commitment to reducing net migration, in particular pushing for more enforcement and to reduce services. This will continue to be played out by the outcome of the Brexit referendum that will potentially reduce welfare entitlements for EU migrants (Katwala and Somerville, 2016: 13).

### **2.4.3. Summary**

In providing an outline of key policy changes over the last few decades, this chapter has illustrated the backdrop within which ASR TSOs have been operating. There has been a dual-pronged attack by the government on ASR organisations' operating environment. Firstly, by the government becoming less receptive to the third sector (Rees and Mullins,

2016) and successive targeted austerity measures, and secondly, from the rising politicised anti-immigration rhetoric influencing the increase in restrictive and deterrent immigration policies. The discussion above illustrates the numerous ways ASRs have been faced with hostile circumstances, with increasingly stringent welfare entitlements and withdrawal of mainstream welfare provision, which has seen a shift in responsibility to the third sector to support these complex needs. As TSOs are increasingly having to deliver public services in response to growing demand at a time of squeezed resources, this burden to some extent also encompasses and falls on faith groups and informal networks to pick up on the areas that are not being appropriately supported for this group. Arguably this has been encouraged by the Conservative government's policy of tackling issues at a more local level (Buckingham and Rees, 2016).

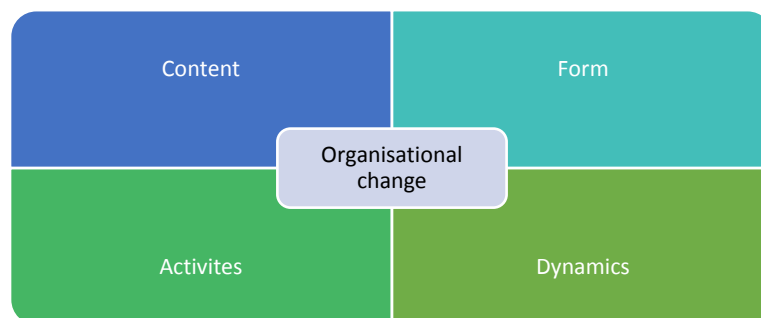
This chapter has provided a broad account of the shifting policy environment, and does not claim it will affect TSOs in a homogenous manner. Nevertheless, there have been a number of risks, dilemmas, and challenges identified, in this shifting policy environment that may influence TSOs' operating environment and inform organisational change. Therefore, the following chapter will review third sector literature and empirical studies that explore and debate the issues raised, highlighting any key themes or gaps within the literature.

# CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

## 3. Introduction

The literature review is divided into two parts. Firstly, a broad discussion on the third sector and current debates are outlined, and secondly, focusing specifically on the ASR third sector. The former part will focus on the concept of organisational change within the third sector, unpacked into four broad themes: context, form, activities and dynamics (as the diagram below demonstrates). Each theme will be outlined and explored in turn to understand the different aspects conceptualised as organisational change, and will provide the background to the research topic.

Figure 3.2. Conceptualisation of organisational change



The concept of organisational change is underdeveloped within the third sector literature, and with no conceptualisation to draw upon the term was broken down into a four-element model as a means systematically to review the literature. The intention was to unpack the concept of organisational change into different levels, rationalised by using an ethnographic approach to conducting the research (see section 5.2.3 for further detail) and wanting to gain an all-round perspective of the phenomenon. This approach was

further supported when reviewing the make-up of the third sector literature, which demonstrated a wealth of literature explaining and rationalising the context of the third sector. It also recognised the occurrence of organisational change within the sector, with references of organisational shifts to 'formalisation', 'professionalisation' and 'hybridisation', and the development of a diverse range of organisational forms. However, little attention has focused on delving deeper into how and why this might happen, or providing detailed descriptions on what the organisations will look like subsequently. The themes Context and Form clearly came out of the literature as important areas to review, however, it was evident there was a lack of nuanced accounts that looked inside the organisations. The other themes, Activities and Dynamics, were identified to provide a different perspective to understand the internal dimensions of the organisations, hence, also explaining the sequential order below. These elements have been defined as:

- **Context:** to understand the multifaceted nature of the environment organisations are operating within and influential to organisational change.
- **Form:** to explore organisational change by looking at the shape, size and different layers and compartments that form an organisation, and how these may differ by organisations across the sector.
- **Activities:** to look at the service provision of an organisation, whether it is shifting and why, and if this is due to changing needs of the beneficiaries or the funding environment.

- **Dynamic:** to ‘look inside’ an organisation to explore how and why change is happening by focusing on the processes, relationships, value and beliefs, to stress the importance of also bringing the actors and agency to the fore.

The chapter will highlight the lack of third sector literature exploring organisational change in the ASR sub-sector, therefore key concepts will be drawn out from literature from other policy fields, such as, the work programme, social housing, and homelessness, which can be applied here. It will also highlight any emerging gaps in the literature and illustrate how each theme produces a secondary research question that the thesis will aim to answer. Discussion in the latter part of the chapter will be on third sector literature focused specifically at the ASR sub-sector. This will explore the experiences of ASR TSOs in this changing operating environment, demonstrating how the ASR sector has evolved, and drawing out some key themes to explain organisational change. Finally, the primary research question will be outlined, and how the primary and secondary research findings will be corroborated, to fill a gap in the literature and contribute to knowledge.

### **3.1. Context**

Chapter Two outlines features in the wider context, such as, the financial crisis and austerity measures, outsourcing of public services and shifting government approaches to the third sector. From reviewing the literature it is evident further systems and dynamics within the contextual environment play a role in understanding organisational change.

This section provides the backdrop to the empirical findings discussed in Chapter Six which discusses the role of exogenous pressures on organisational change.

### **3.1.1. Explaining the existence of the third sector**

There is growing debate over the role and existence of the third sector, with the state rolling back its services and shrinking in size. It is not inevitable the third sector will step into this role delivering welfare services, particularly as there are competing forces from the private sector. Nevertheless, the third sector has taken on a prominent role partly by the government being attracted to the third sector's advantageous features i.e. perceived as trustworthy, and cheaper. A number of market-based models have been developed to explore the existence of TSOs in response to various failures in the wider system. These have been coined the 'three failures theory' (Steinberg, 2006) due to each illustrating different perspectives on market failure and how they fit together. These will be explained in turn.

Weisbrod (1986) was the first to begin to understand the economics and the third sector. He describes how the government provides welfare goods and services to meet the needs of the majority within society, with the intention to achieve higher chances for re-election from support by the 'median voter'. Consequentially, this means that individuals whose needs are outside of the majority, will not be sufficiently supported by public services. Plus, as a result of market failure these minority needs will also not appropriately be met by the private sector, therefore, 'voluntary organisations come into existence as

*extra government providers of collective-consumption goods* (author's original italics, 1986: 30). These perceptions are often echoed in later literature, such as, Baines et al (2011) describing the sector's purpose as to 'fill gaps' in mainstream provision, or Harris (2001) claiming 'the government in turn fails, deliberately or accidentally, to meet the full demand for public goods, and therefore voluntary organisations spring up (or are subsidised by the state) to fill the gaps' (Harris, 2001: 11). This partially explains why the third sector is distinctive by being well connected to particular disadvantaged sub-groups within the community and motivated to specialise its services to certain groups, therefore 'the more diverse the community, the more extensive the non-profit sector it is likely to have' (Salamon, 1987: 35).

A counter argument to Weisbrod's focus on government failure is Hansmann's (1987) perspective that the third sector is perceived as more trustworthy than the private sector, as a consequence of the non-distribution constraint. He claims that non-profits 'arise in situations in which, owing either to the circumstances under which the service is purchased or consumed or to the nature of the service itself, consumers feel unable to evaluate accurately the quantity and quality of the service a firm produces for them' (p.29). When applied to the contract environment, where the state is purchasing goods and services private sector agencies are viewed negatively as being driven by profit and not always operating in the clients' best interests. In comparison, the third sector is distinguished as being trustworthy, value driven, and already having legitimacy with the disadvantaged groups, placing the organisations in an advantageous position when competing for contracts. However, this argument has been critiqued by Billis and

Glennester (1998) who claim it does not capture the difference between voluntary and for profit organisations, stating in some cases for profit organisations may operate with low administration costs but also have gained high levels of trust. It will also be discussed later on how these characteristics may no longer be valued in the same way, with an increasing incentive by the government to drive costs down and maximise service provision efficiency.

Salamon's (1987) article 'Of market failure' provides insight on the failures of both the government and the third sector, and how the weaknesses of the two sectors in fact correspond with one another. He coins the theory 'voluntary failure' that, contrary to common perception, claims the third sector should instead be delivering all welfare services. However, as a consequence of the failings of the voluntary sector in securing sufficient revenue to maintain provision, this results in the state having to fill in the gaps in service provision. The theory recognizes the sector's range of advantageous features, but in parallel highlights the sector's flaws and limitations:

- *Philanthropic insufficiency* that refers to the level of third sector funding being relatively unstable and dependent on the challenges faced by society.
- *Philanthropic particularism* that highlights how donations tend to have a narrow focus and may exclude some groups of the community.
- *Philanthropic paternalism* that is concerned with funders and trustees having a disproportionate influence on the services.



- *Philanthropic amateurism* that is a result of volunteers playing a key role in delivering activities and might not be highly skilled or have expertise.

Often the literature presents the third sector as the better service provider in the 'mixed economy of welfare', emphasizing the value-driven and mission-focused premise, with many protagonists championing for the sector to play a key role in future welfare services. However, Salamon opens up interesting debate on understanding both the strengths and the weaknesses of the sector and where there is room for development. His argument provides insight on how the state and third sector correspond with one another's strengths and weaknesses, and by combining two sides to the debate provides a more comprehensive explanation on why the third sector exists within the 'welfare mix'.

Subsequent literature has been critical of the 'three failure theory'. For example, Steinberg (2006) claims the notion is based around the three sectors forming a circle, with each sector responding to the failures of the other two. He argues this circle is an incomplete picture, by not looking at the supply side but tends to focus primarily on the demand side. He states 'the various pieces explain why consumers would want to buy from and donors donate to nonprofit organisations, but do not explain why nonprofits are there for them to use' (ibid, p.128). Having more explanation of the supply side of these organisations would complement the other theories on the demand side. Steinberg also argues there is a disproportionate emphasis on efficiency in the market-based models, in the broad economic sense, instead he claims more research is needed to unpack the distinctive

nature of TSOs, illuminating the multiple roles they can play, and as Steinberg describes 'closing the circle'.

The rationale behind Steinberg's critique is that it is easy to understand the supply side for for-profit organisations, due to every organization wanting to maximize its profit. If the demand side increases it is likely more organisations will emerge, all with the intention to maximize profit, and ultimately create a competitive market. In regard to the third sector, Steinberg claims it is much more complicated, as organisations are keen to deliver high quality services but have little desire to maximize profits, which means this can be done at a lower cost. In the third sector the supply side can be driven by a number of different rationales, and not just follow the same objective of maximising profit. However, the market failure framework does not work when explaining the rationale for the third sector, as it does not lend itself to reflect on the social purpose of the organization, therefore hinders being able to fully explain the supply side of the third sector.

Billis and Glennester (1998) advance from these previous theories by focusing on sector specific characteristics and developing their theory on voluntary sector comparative advantage. They argue that a defining third sector feature is 'stakeholder ambiguity', meaning TSOs are formed of multiple stakeholders, and by associating them with the range of states of beneficiary disadvantage (financial, personal, societal, community), 'it is the very complexity or ambiguity of voluntary organisations which can provide them with comparative advantages' (ibid, p.94). They suggest the third sector shares similar

characteristics to the public and private sector, however, it is the complex and ambiguous features of TSOs that places them in an advantageous position to meet the needs of those that are disadvantaged within society.

### **3.1.2. Changing sectoral relationships**

Following on from the previous section that explores the existence of the third sector, similar approaches have been used to explain the relationship between the government and third sector. This section will first discuss various conceptual perspectives that have been used to understand government and third sector relations. Following this, the main arguments from third sector literature and empirical studies on government and third sector relations will be outlined. Briefly, these mainly illustrate the changing nature of the relationship but also show a disproportionate emphasis on TSOs delivering service provision with the state holding a more powerful position in the relationship,

Smith and Gronbjerg (2006) dispute that the relationship between the government and third sector should only be based on their interaction through service provision, but argue it also includes legal frameworks, and the influential role the third sector plays on government agenda. They examine different frameworks to fully conceptualise the relationship between the two sectors, which is further developed into three models. The first model draws upon the market-based frameworks illustrated in the previous section, and describes how the failures of the government and third sector create conditions for

an exchange relation between the two sectors. Subsequently, this results in the 'nonprofit organisations hav[ing] multiple and complex exchange relations with government, reflecting many forms in which they receive government support' (Smith and Gronbjerg 2006, p.227). This illustrates the complexity and diversity of interorganisational relationships that are involved in the mixed economy of delivering welfare services, which acts as a counter argument to the typical perception in the wider literature of a homogenous relationship between the two.

Similar to the previous section, Smith and Gronbjerg also recognise that these market-based models are primarily concerned with assumptions associated with efficiency, rather than the distinctive values of TSOs or the social relations at a community level. Therefore, the second model focuses on the civil society and social movement perspective, which is interested in understanding goals in society, such as, 'responsiveness, freedom, cooperation, legitimacy, individual and community responsibility, obligation, and social capital' (ibid, p.229). A useful feature of this model is the social movement perspective, which typically looks at how the third sector tries to change and transform government policy. This differs to the previous model outlined that focused on service delivery, as this perspective is interested in the institutionalisation of social movements to produce TSOs, by shifting private concerns into public concerns i.e. the women's movement, political advocacy groups, HIV, mental health. TSOs that support social movements typically have conflictual relationships with the government, but through developing various organisational forms this can be successful in disrupting political agenda. This model highlights the influential role TSOs play towards the government and altering public policy.

However, this relationship can face scrutiny. When driving for 'global public goods' it may at some point lead to organisations receiving public funds, so arguably 'may be constrained in its ability to directly criticise government policy' (ibid, p.233), these thoughts are also echoed further on in the wider literature.

The final model put forth by Smith and Gronbjerg applies a neoinstitutional perspective to illustrate how the institutional environment can be influential in shaping the third sector. They acknowledge that the social movement perspective still takes on a valuable role, illustrated by the vibrant nature of the sector, 'as the products of citizen demand and cooperative social networks' (ibid, p.235). Here the third sector is seen to represent the choices of individuals and the needs of the community, however, the neoinstitutional perspective also acknowledges the sector is shaped by the institutional environment e.g. the oppressive regulations of commissioning that can undermine how TSOs operate. Compared to the other models, this final perspective argues there is a mutual dependence and synergism between the government and third sector (ibid, p.235), stressing the importance of looking at both the processes and environment involved (this will be explored in more depth in Chapter Four).

Moving on to the wider third sector literature, some advantages have been recognised from the state-sectoral relationship, such as, the rise in third sector recognition by the government has raised the sector's profile within the policy arena (Alcock, 2013). On the other hand the third sector is primarily thought to be placed in a vulnerable position in this

new operating environment. Carmel and Harlock (2008) argue that Labour's policy developments promoting a partnership relationship (through the Compact) have unified the sector and become a 'governable terrain' to pursue government objectives, such as, shifting responsibility of public services to the third sector. In their words 'through the formal dimension of partnership and the operational dimension of procurement and performance, VCOs are to be drawn into and made subject to processes of state governing' (2008: p167). There is little empirical evidence on the commissioning relationship between the state and third sector, nevertheless a burst of lively debate on the shift in power dynamics and suppressive nature of this process has developed, particularly by the National Coalition for Independent Action (NCIA) (Milbourne, 2013; Benson, 2014).

It could be argued that too much emphasis has been placed on the state-third sector relationship. Often commentators and practitioners perceive independence and autonomy to be a fundamental feature of the third sector, which encourages the sector's voice to be continually heard and not compromised by government agenda. However, Crouch's (2011) research on 'A new age of interdependence' disputes the third sector's desire for complete independence from the state. Instead, it provides another picture of how the state and third sector are involved in an interdependent relationship, arguing 'it was felt that strong, effective relationships, with those in all sectors, were far more important than pursuing organisational independence as some kind of abstract ideal' (2011: 252-253). The article also raises concern over poor quality relationships between

commissioners and TSOs, often a result of poor communication, mismanagement, and lack of knowledge on how TSOs operate and their distinctive nature.

Other commentators also support the idea that 'TSOs are seen as formally independent from the state, but in practice they exist in complex interdependent relationships with public bodies which vary in their intensity, meaning and impact' (Macmillan, 2015: 104). The state and third sector are interwoven in different capacities, however the complexity and nuance of the relationships is only lightly touched on in the literature. Attention is mainly focused on how the state holds a stronger and more powerful position in the relationship, whereas the third sector is seen as comparatively weak (Macmillan, 2015). However, Hoggett (2004) describes how relationships can vary by geographical location, depending on the local authority and the particular departments, which might have conflicting ways of working. Relationships formed can be dependent on the individuals involved, and how these relationships have developed over a period of time (Hoggett, 2004; Bennett, 2008).

Literature on third sector relationships tends to be restricted to the public and third sector, with little attention on the extending relationship between the private and third sector. There has been a growing involvement of the private sector in the delivery of welfare services and development of the prime contracting model, also an increase in promoting corporate giving and the government investing in capacity building. Therefore, it is arguable there will be continued development in this type of relationship. There is limited commentary on the issue in the literature, although some strong political perspectives

from the NCIA are highly critical of such relationships developing between the private and third sector. For example, Benson (2014) argues this could be detrimental to public perception of TSOs working alongside certain private agencies that are perceived to not have the clients' interest at heart, therefore to the detriment of the organisation's legitimacy, trust and reputation (also see section 2.2.1).

The gaps in the literature demonstrate how further empirical research is required to unpack the different forms of relationships that are emerging and the range these can take across different bodies and statutory agencies. By doing so, it would begin to untangle the complexities of these relationships, the different roles and dynamics, and build a clearer picture on the interdependency and how the position of the sectors is the product of a multiple range of factors.

### **3.1.3. Marketisation**

With the changing funding environment, the government shift to outsourcing public services and increasing contract competition, there has been extensive debate on whether this will have a detrimental impact on the organisational form of TSOs (Dart, 2004; Eikenberry and Kluver, 2004; Eikenberry, 2009; Bruce and Chew, 2011). With the increasing emphasis on diversification of resources to refrain from dependency on grants and donations, perceived as a survival mechanism in times of economic uncertainty (NCVO, 2015), TSOs have looked to secure more stability from earned revenue, such as government contracts and selling goods and services. Alongside this, there have been institutional forces, with the government aiming not only for TSOs to deliver more welfare



services, but also encouraging TSOs to become more enterprising and business-like in their manner (Haugh and Kitson, 2007). This push is evident by the government supporting TSOs to get ready to compete for contracts, one example being the Investment and Contract Readiness Fund (2016), which could be viewed as an incentive to following this approach. With the emphasis being on cost efficiency, effectiveness of welfare provision for the beneficiaries, and competition, these various exogenous pressures have influenced the environment to become more market-focused, which some commentators have argued has resulted in the marketization of the third sector (Salamon, 1997).

A major concern is that TSOs have adopted business-like characteristics. Specifically, implementing private sector values by refocusing the fundraising strategy to include earned income, and concentrating resources on setting up new business ventures or selling services (Eikenberry, 2009). Applying private sector approaches and values, it is thought, will alter the distinctive characteristics associated with the third sector, such as, altruism, compassion, accountability and philanthropy (Bruce and Chew, 2011). Eikenberry and Kluver (2004) argue that TSOs are 'more than just tools for achieving the most efficient and effective mode of service delivery; they are also important vehicles for creating and maintaining a strong civil society' (p.138). Without these distinctive characteristics it is argued the boundaries between the market and state are becoming increasingly blurry, and this could result in organisations concentrating on chasing resources and straying from their missions. This thesis argues that further research is required to unpack these different features of professionalization and business-like

approaches, to illustrate the spectrum of organisational change and the influence of the wider context. This thesis explores whether organisations are able to balance the demands and requirements associated with professionalization and private sector characteristics, whilst still remaining firmly client-focused and driven by core values. Therefore, the research will aim to answer the secondary question:

***1) How are internal organisational developments being influenced by the wider systems of the contextual environment the organisations are operating within?***

### **3.2. Form**

Following on from Chapter Two that describes the third sector policy environment and demonstrates the vast differences in shape, size and forms in the sector, this section aims to unpack organisational change in TSOs and explore how and why organisational form might develop over time. This section moves on from the previous section on the broader context to focus more specifically on describing the features of the sector, which provides the backdrop to how organisational forms have changed, touching on debates on why this has come about, and illustrate the heterogeneity of the sector and diversity in forms.

#### **3.2.1. Conceptualising the third sector**

Organisational size is only one defining feature. Literature highlights other features that further differentiate organisations within the sector, such as, by organisation mission,

target client group, organisational structure and legal constitution (Haugh and Kitson, 2007; Milbourne, 2013; Buckingham, 2009; Billis, 2010). However, these distinguishing features tend broadly to group the organisations and ignore their heterogeneity and diversity across the sector. For example, although some organisations may target the same client group, the activities undertaken may vary considerably: by focusing on delivering services, or acting as advocates, or primarily undertaking a campaigning role. To make conceptualisation more complex the organisations may adopt various combinations of these numerous features, which ultimately produce different organisational formations. This has led to the sector being well-referenced as a 'loose and baggy monster' (Kendall and Knapp, 1995). As Milbourne (2013) highlights, even if the organisations appear to share similar features and social purpose, the organisations' founding values and approach to targeting the services can vary significantly by organisation. Consequently, these variations within the sector can sometimes produce tensions and power dynamics between organisations and fields that can lead them consciously choosing to differentiate themselves from one another. In these situations, it is more likely an organisation will identify itself with the subsector (i.e. advice, migration) it is situated within, with other like-minded organisations, rather than associating itself with a 'sector' as a homogenous entity (Alcock, 2013).

Some distinguishing characteristics have been highlighted as common features shared by TSOs, such as, being not for profit, value-driven, independent, voluntarism and client-focused, and in some instances motivated by religious beliefs, which advocates the 'distinctiveness' of the sector (Macmillan, 2013a). Another method for defining the sector

and drawing out commonalities is to highlight the contrasting features it has to the market and state. However, this has been criticised for focusing on the negative attributes (non-profit, non-government, non-statutory) that highlight what the sector is not rather than identifying the advantageous characteristics and features of what the sector can do (Alcock, 2010). This approach to defining the sector is relevant when thinking in terms of the 'mixed economy of welfare provision', and how the third sector is positioned in relation to the private and public sector. However, definitions based on contrasting sector characteristics are becoming out-dated with the emergence of research illustrating the blurring of boundaries between the various sectors, and TSOs increasingly showing signs of hybridity by adopting characteristics from both the market and the state (see section 3.2.3 for more discussion).

The third sector has been referred to as a contested 'field' (Macmillan, 2010) and there are challenges to defining the sector, which raises queries into why there is a desire to homogenise the sector. Alcock (2010) describes the idea of a single sector to form a 'strategic unity' of different alliances and interests embedded within a particular policy context rather than common features, 'from which political profile and policy support and financial backing for this broader sector can be extracted' (p.19). Although Alcock notes this might be a rather discouraging perspective, that the construction of a 'strategic unity' is a response to developing government policy and discourse, there are still clear advantages in raising the sector's profile. Highlighting the sector's issues, needs and challenges has encouraged more government support and awareness within policy making. Nonetheless, the issue of diversity remains problematic due to the complexities

of forming policies for a sector that has diversity in its role, activities and function, which result in varying challenges and needs. Implemented policies will ultimately end up supporting some organisations and not others (Alcock, 2013), such as, differences between the needs and focus of community organisations or social enterprises, or variations by size. Policy development tends to focus on service delivery, therefore excludes those organisations not delivering welfare services, or unable (or unwilling) to compete in the competitive market-like environment.

Macmillan (2013a) provides an alternative perspective on distinctiveness, rather than focusing on identifying distinctive characteristics he aims to unpack why it is important the sector is perceived as being distinctive. He claims distinctiveness of organisations is not only viewed as important from outside the sector, being perceived as distinctive by external stakeholders to access and maintain resources, but is also viewed as essential for organisations to differentiate themselves within the third sector (see also Chew and Osborne, 2008; 2009). Chew and Osborne (2008) provide insight into how key internal stakeholders undertake strategies of distinctiveness, by assessing the organisation's strengths and available resources, and strategically positioning the organisation in a niche within the wider environment. They define positioning as 'a managerial decision-process to develop an organisation-level positioning strategy that aims to effectively differentiate the organisation from other service providers' (Chew, 2005: 4). Chew and Osborne (2008) describe it as distinguishing a third sector approach of wanting to move outside the competitive environment and to find new collaborations in pursuit of the organisation's mission. With the client at the focus of the organisation's strategizing, the organisation

positions itself with other like-minded organisations that could be perceived as competitors, rather than continuing to be suppressed by the boundaries of sectors and restraining definitions.

Chew and Osborne (2009) further explore this positioning of organisations not only within the sector, but also in sub-sectors, with organisations aiming to find a niche either geographically, or targeting a particular service user (even a particular niche within a subgroup), or by the type of activities and approach the organisation takes. Chew and Osborne (2009: 103) also provide evidence of organisations forming longer-term plans by positioning themselves strategically in different ways in response to the changing external environment. This literature provides useful insight into understanding TSOs not only by the organisational form of defining characteristics, diversity and variation, but also exploring more widely how they are situated within the environment.

### **3.2.2. Professionalisation**

A recurring theme in the literature on organisational change is the reference to 'formalisation', 'professionalisation' or 'bureaucratisation' (Ellis Paine and Hill, 2016), which addresses how some organisations have moved away from being *ad hoc* informal agencies to adopting more formalized approaches and bureaucratic operating systems. This assumes that TSOs were previously non-professional and informal, or tend to be small, volunteer-led groups, with a flat staff structure (Rochester, 2013) and a 'fluffy' approach to delivering services. The previous section identified advantageous features

of the third sector, however other literature distinguishes the negative stereotypes of the sector, such as, 'amateurism' (Salamon, 1987) and 'unprofessional' (Crouch, 2011). For example, Bennett (2008) described 'a VO [voluntary organisation] could have low costs, yet equally might lack resources and administrative infrastructure and have a management that is amateurish, unaccountable, and dominated by wealthy and paternalistic members' (p. 272).

Commentators recognise that some organisations undergo a process of professionalization, and it is becoming more widely accepted to do so (Paton et al., 2007), by adopting professional managerial styles and more formalized structures and operational processes. For example, this has been directly pushed by the national agency AVECO investing in professional development in third sector leadership and arguing professionalism should no longer be viewed as a 'guilty secret' (Kirchner, 2006). At a more practical level the increasing number of complex service provisions, and organisations replacing volunteers with highly skilled paid staff (Milligan and Fyfe, 2005), has led to formalising staff structures and introducing more bureaucratic HR processes. Although, with the recent public expenditure cutbacks, some organisations are now having to replace paid workers with unskilled volunteers. These shifts in the workforce are lightly touched upon in the literature, therefore this issue is taken up and discussed further: see section 3.4.2 on work dynamics.

There have been varying debates as to why this type of organisational change occurs, some claiming it is to counter the associated negative stereotypes (Crouch, 2011), or organisations rethinking how to market themselves (Bennett, 2008). A common argument is that organisations are attempting to appear more competitive in the funding environment and having to meet particular contractual requirements. Therefore, organisations have been pushed into changing their internal structures, such as, applying monitoring and evaluating systems and having to demonstrate their accountability. Either way, this is often met with concern that organisations are changing to the detriment, and consequently, eroding the distinctive characteristics of the sector, such as, its autonomy, flexibility and innovation (see section 3.3.2. for more discussion).

These negative views of the contract environment can give the perception this shift in managerialism and professionalisim was born from this era. However, it has been noted this move towards professionalisation and formalisation took place before the shift from grants to contracts, and should not solely be associated with the influences from contracting (Dart, 2004). In the current competitive funding climate grant arrangements can be just as demanding as contracts and require organisations to operate in a bureaucratised and professional manner to account for the funds provided (see empirical findings, section 6.2.3). On another note, it is relevant to recognize the value and benefit in organisations formalizing the structures, increasing their efficiency and effectiveness in the way they operate, with the aim to improve the quality of services for client needs. This area requires further research to show the benefits and limitations of some organisations becoming professionalized and formalized, however this thesis argues that this process



is not homogenous across the sector but is dependent on organisations' experience. Observation needs to be undertaken on the everyday practice of organisations to understand when these changes may occur, to what degree, and what impact this may have on the organisations.

### **3.2.3. Hybridisation**

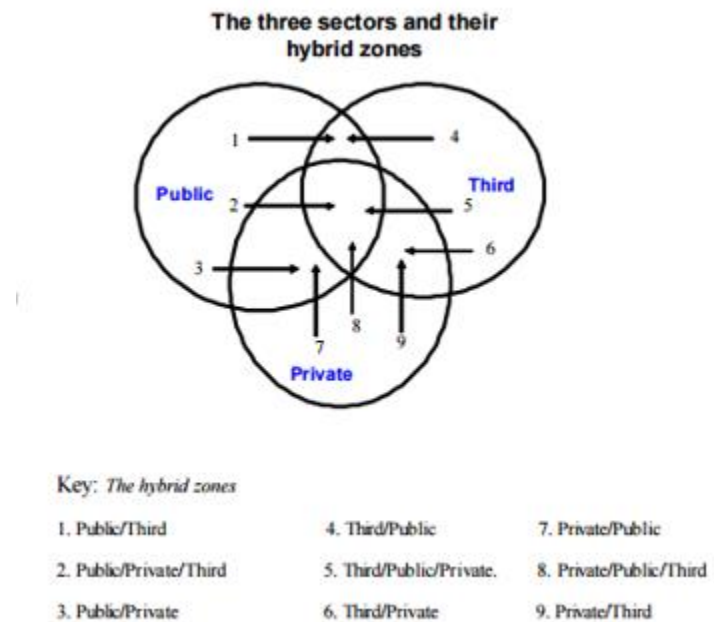
A different approach to discussing organisational change is the idea that TSOs are showing signs of hybridisation (see Evers, 2005; Mullins, 2006; Binder, 2007; Buckingham, 2011; Smith, 2010). Hybridisation is a process of organisations adjusting to the changing context of a 'mixed economy of welfare', where the state is the purchaser of services from the third and private sectors and the increasingly competitive environment is creating a 'blurring' in organisational form across the sectors. In contrast to the previous discussion on professionalisation, this theory refers to TSOs adopting characteristics from both the public and private sectors, adopting different combinations of principles and values, and producing varying forms of hybrid organisations.

The concept of hybridity is not a new notion, but has received recognition due to the advance and range of hybrid organisations and its insight into conceptualising organisational change. The literature differs in perspectives on the impact of hybridity and the driving forces behind this organisational change (Billis, 2010; Brandsen et al., 2005; Smith, 2010). For example, various commentators have seen hybridisation as an understandable adjustment to the turbulent environment of increased contract

competition and striving for diversification of revenue (Smith 2010). Whilst others refer to the pressures from exogenous forces, such as, from changes in policy (Harris, 2010) and the economic recession (Eikenberry, 2009). Some are concerned the process of hybridisation could possibly create challenges and displace the core features of TSOs (Billis, 2010). Whereas, others have viewed the development in organisational form as an 'inevitable' move by organisations adapting to the changing environment, with Brandsen et al. (2005) using the metaphor of the third sector adopting a 'chameleon' like quality.

Hybridisation does not mean organisations take on any or all characteristics from overlapping with the public and private sectors, instead hybridity is about adopting 'fundamental and distinctly different governance and operational principles in each sector' (Billis, 2010: 3). There is mixed debate on the definition of hybridity (see Smith (2010) for a detailed discussion), although discussion is generally founded on where the third sector is positioned between the private and public sector. Evers and Laville (2005) use a triangular illustration to show how the third sector is located in the middle of the other sectors, market, state, and community sector, each representing a different corner. This conceptualisation focuses on how the third sector is connected to and differentiated from the three other sectors, describing where these sectors meet as creating 'tension fields'. Recent debate by Billis' (2010) edited book *Hybrid organisations and the third sector* expands on this conceptualisation by using a circular diagram (see below) to emphasise the overlapping and porous nature of the boundaries between the sectors.

Figure 3.3. Billis (2010) conceptualisation of hybridization



This approach to understanding hybrid organisations focuses on the distinctive principles of each sector, or as Billis refers to ‘the rules of the game’, and in this case concentrates on the third, public and private sectors. He describes where the different sectors overlap as resulting in varied hybrid organisational forms being produced, as illustrated in the figure above. Whereas Evers and Laville (2004) refer to the sectors’ boundaries as ‘tension fields’, Billis instead describes these boundaries as being porous and the ‘blurring’ of sectors resulting in various forms of hybrid organisations. Billis identifies four hybrid concepts to understand the various forms; these are: ‘shallow’, ‘entrenched’, ‘enacted’ and ‘organic’. As Macmillan (2013a) points out the increase in these hybrid organisational forms undermines the distinctive nature TSOs are argued to possess (see section 3.2.1), by further undermining defining characteristics of the sector and demonstrating diversity and variation.

The concept of hybridisation has been criticised for the risks of adopting market-like values and practices that could conflict with the TSOs original core principles (see section 3.1.3 for further discussion). Other commentators are critical that hybridisation is under-theorised, arguing these risks are outdated and often broad-brush. Drawing from European literature, Brandsen and Karre (2011) argue hybrid organisations to be complex and multi-layered, which enable organisations to navigate between different principles, funding ideologies and position themselves between conflicting values. They stress that the experience of hybridity is dependent on the organisation's situation i.e. environment, exposure to professional experience and policy field. Another European study by Hustinx et al. (2015) adds to this idea of different levels of experience by exploring the role and experiences of the staff and volunteers within the process of hybridisation.

Moving back to the UK context, Skelcher and Smith (2015) support these criticisms of earlier hybrid literature, arguing it is under-theorised with limited information on 'what it is that creates a hybrid, whether different forms of hybrid emerge in different situations, and if so what consequences arise' (p. 434). Although, more attention has been focused on researching the diversity of hybridity, looking at differing organisational forms in subsectors, such as homelessness TSOs (Buckingham, 2011) and social housing (Mullins and Acheson, 2014), this research is restricted to particular policy fields and tends to focus on exogenous pressures as the driving force. Further research is required into alternative policy fields, and, as Brandsen and Karre (2011) point out, hybridisation should be observed at multiple levels of an organisation to understand the variety of experiences. Similar to other commentators (Skelcher and Smith, 2015) this thesis will

draw on theoretical principles from Institutional Logics (refer to Chapter Four), which provides insight on how varying forms and shapes of hybrid organisations are produced by negotiating between different logics. This will indicate how organisations play an active role in shaping their forms, not just passively responding to the environment (Mullins et al., 2012), and how conflicting values can be negotiated with one another.

These three sections have provided insight into the diversity and scope of organisational form, shapes and sizes within the third sector. However, they have outlined gaps in literature on organisational change and the need for further research to understand how and why organisations change shape, but also go beyond broad-bush perspectives stating organisational change occurs in the same way. In an attempt to unpack organisational change the thesis needs to investigate the organisational form of the case studies, how this has changed over the years, and what has influenced these developments. It is also relevant to investigate how the organisation portrays its external appearance, whether this is reflected in the internal features, and if this is fuelled by the same rationale. Therefore, the research aims to answer the following secondary questions:

***2) What changes have been made to the organisational form?***

***3) How has the organisation developed its external appearance? Is this contradictory to the organisational form?***

### **3.3. Activities**

As noted in the above section, the third sector has a history of delivering a wide range of activities other than welfare services; to name just a few: advocacy, campaigning, culture and recreation, research and youth clubs. These intend to reach a diverse range of social groups, some of which are marginalised from mainstream provision. Although TSOs have many functions policy and practice tend to focus on one area: TSOs as service providers. As part of understanding organisational change, this thesis has identified activities as an important factor to investigate, highlighting the type of service delivery, and how these are shaped by both exogenous and endogenous factors.

#### **3.3.1. Changing activities**

There has been rising concern within the literature that certain activities have seen a decline within the third sector. Commentators have argued organisations are being pushed to deliver public services that has meant organisations have less time and capacity to play an advocating role (Harris et al., 2004), and others have identified a specific decline in community development work amongst those that see it as part of their remit (Cairns et al., 2006). Debate tends to be around TSOs increasingly being statutory funded to deliver public services, and often in a contractual arrangement. This is due to TSOs perceiving contracts as more sustainable income revenue and public agencies preferring contracts to grants. However, this thesis argues that the shift in service provision and the decline in certain activities is more complex than just changing statutory funding arrangements. Chapter Two highlighted a number of the issues, such as, the

squeeze on resources from the financial crisis, welfare reform leading to an increase in people living in hardship, the rise in 'welfare chauvinism' creating a decline in welfare entitlements, which has provided an increase in demand on service provision. Arguably, this has meant TSOs have fewer resources and capacity to deliver different streams of activities, to the detriment of certain activities, such as, advocacy, research and campaigning (LBF, 2017), that are perceived as resource heavy and non-essential in a time of financial austerity. Furthermore, the knock-on effect of public expenditure cutbacks to service provision, is that charitable trust funding increasingly subsidises public services to continue their delivery. This illustrates how the decline in resources and capacity available for organisations is impacting on the opportunities to develop innovative projects or the flexibility to be reactive to rising client needs, which has been argued to indicate that the sector is losing its autonomy.

Chapter Two touched upon how RCOs have been recognised by the government as playing an important role in integrating ASRs into the community. However, Griffiths et al. (2005) note that the emergence of organisations in dispersal areas (see section 2.3.1.) involved the need to concentrate resources on providing defensive services rather than community development work, which is to the detriment of successful integration and social cohesion. Phillimore and Goodson (2010) have described that over the years demand for refugee services has increased due to client needs changing, partly as a response to evolving legal status and shifting from new arrivals to issues of settlement. In recent years this picture has become even bleaker, with austerity being played out through policy measures and the rolling back of state services, and there has been a rise

in demand on TS services coupled with a significant squeeze on resources (Wilding, 2010). This has not only meant organisations have had to refocus limited resources to provide basic services that are often reactive rather than preventative, but there is rising concern that overstretched capacity and work intensification could diminish the quality of service provision. Section 7.1.2 outlines empirical findings discussing these issues.

### **3.3.2. Influence of the commissioning landscape**

Diversification of revenue is not a new approach to navigate the changing funding landscape (Froelich, 1999). Nevertheless, in recent years there has been growing concern about the increase in contracting out public services and whether this has led to some TSOs becoming dependent on statutory contracts (Benson, 2014; Cornforth, 2014). As noted above service delivery is only one function TSOs can undertake and not all TSOs acquire statutory funding (see section 2.3.1. for details), however a wealth of third sector literature is focused on this shift towards contractual arrangements and their effect.

Advantageous features of contracting are highlighted, such as being perceived as long-term arrangements compared to grants, providing more incentives to include full cost recovery, and the attraction for TSOs to work in collaboration with the government (Bennett, 2008; Carmel and Harlock, 2008). However, an abundance of literature debates the challenges and dilemmas that arise from TSOs entering a funding environment based on market style principles (Chapman et al., 2008). Macmillan (2010) reviews a number of studies that reported feelings of uncertainty and confusion from TSOs entering this new



tendering process (Packwood, 2007; Buckingham, 2009), and these concerns continued even once contracts were successfully won (Rees, 2008).

Milbourne (2013) argues that when public funds were primarily provided through grants the relationship between the state and third sector was more informal and based on trust. However, with the shift towards more formal contractual arrangements, this trust has been challenged by making unrealistic demands, with requirements for monitoring and demonstrating accountability (Milbourne, 2013; Carmel and Harlock, 2008). A major criticism of the contractual arrangement is the increasing focus on service delivery having measurable outcomes that can be used to assess the effectiveness of the services (Milbourne, 2013). This evidently raises challenges for services that might not have tangible outcomes, which could result in further decline of certain activities, by commissioners not viewing them as value for money. Furthermore, commentators argue there has been an increase in the 'burden of monitoring' (Chapman et al., 2008), primarily as the state has shifted the responsibility onto the third sector who are required to meet statutory regulations and procedures. Being restrained by contractual requirements and having to hit targets can stifle organisations from responding innovatively or responsively to meet the need of disadvantaged social groups (Milbourne, 2013).

Buckingham (2009) highlights how the refocusing of resources and trying to meet contract priorities could alter the approach an organisation undertook to delivering activities. This process of chasing funding has been described by commentators as 'mission drift'. It

refers to an organisation straying from its mission when trying to obtain funding in an increasingly competitive environment (Nevile, 2010), and resulting in delivering services to keep the organisation running rather than fulfilling the mission. Some commentators are cautious that this phenomenon could occur (Rees, 2008; Packwood, 2007), whereas others put forth a stronger argument for its existence (Cairns, et al., 2005; Flynn, 1996), that some organisations focus on survival rather than prioritising the service users (Chapman et al., 2008). Macmillan (2010) provides a counter argument that although this issue has received significant attention from commentators, there is limited evidence that demonstrates its occurrence. Instead commentators argue TSOs have continued to maintain a strong core mission in delivering activities (Nevile, 2010; Chew and Osborne, 2008).

It was previously suspected that in response to this competitive environment and squeezed resources, TSOs would be more likely to consider collaborations and mergers. Counter arguments are identified, though: heightened competition between the TSOs (Buckingham, 2010; 2012), and organisations found to not be that keen to merge with others (Chapman et al., 2008; Macmillan et al., 2013). Buckingham (2012) provides insight on the diversity of responses from TSOs to contracting (2010), echoing previous arguments that there is division within the third sector amongst organisations that are involved in government contracts. She found organisations that were well-resourced and professionalized were more likely to undertake government contracts, than organisations that were heavily reliant on volunteers and donations. This could be advantageous to the

latter organisations in terms of holding onto their independence but could push them to the edges of welfare provision.

A fundamental issue of these contractual arrangements is the underlying power dynamics, or as Crouch (2011) indicates, not wanting to 'bite the hand that feeds them', which could be a persuasive factor for organisations not campaigning against controversial issues. Becoming more involved in service delivery can result in 'killing the goose'- by undermining the positive features of the third sector that the government was initially drawn to (Aiken and Bode, 2009).

The funding environment plays a role in the delivery of services, either through the varying type of resource, the funding relationship, or the squeeze on resources. However, this thesis does not claim TSOs' experience of the funding environment is homogenous, but will vary by combinations of, subsector, funding mix and locality. What is noticeable is that more empirical research is needed to unpack this diversity of funding and varying experiences rather than the misleading perception that all TSOs are pushed into oppressive contractual arrangements and become heavily dependent on state funding. To gain more insight into these issues raised, the research aims to answer the secondary question:

***4) How have the organisations' funding strategies changed and how has this shaped the service delivery of the organisation?***

### **3.4. Dynamics**

This thesis has recognised a disproportionate emphasis within third sector literature on the role of exogenous pressures influencing organisational change, compared to the limited acknowledgment of endogenous forces. This chapter has already shown commentators focus on TSOs passively responding to the wider environment (Milbourne, 2013), or activities shifting in response to the changing funding environment, viewing internal processes and practices as additional features, or products of the external environment. There has been some recent move towards empirical research exploring human agency within organisations and the influence this has on organisational change and the surrounding operating environment (Macmillan et al., 2013), and some commentators arguing the importance of investigating the role of human agency in social change (Acheson, 2014; Mullins and Acheson, 2014). Acheson (2014) argue 'not only do we need to know how organisations adapt and survive, more importantly, we also need to know more about the nature of the links between the practices of people within TSOs and larger process of change' (p.294).

Whilst Acheson claims the gap in literature is a result of theories not being robust enough to understand the role of agency in this process, this thesis argues equivalent attention should be given to exploring and understanding the complexities of organisations and thus a multi-level analysis of an organisation should be undertaken (see Chapter Four). Drawing on ethnographic principles (see Chapter Five for more detail) this section applies the concept 'dynamics' as a synonym for internal practices, further elaborated as 'looking

inside' organisations and focusing on the processes, relationships, values and beliefs. By exploring micro-level observations it offers insight into the tensions, challenges, conflicts and power dynamics that may arise within an organisation, influencing organisational change. The limited third sector literature that does look inside organisation is split into two sections, firstly, looking at leadership and governance, secondly, unpacking work conditions and collective action, which directly relates to the empirical evidence discussed in Chapter Eight.

### **3.4.1. Leadership and governance**

Third sector literature on endogenous systems within an organisation tends to take a top heavy approach, by concentrating on concepts such as leadership and governance, which have both been the subject to growing attention. Interest in leadership has expanded in recent years due to the growth of the sector, increasing involvement in delivering public services, and the shift in attitudes towards organisations trying to develop good managerialism and professionalism (Paton et al., 2007). Particular interest has been given to defining the characteristics and skills required for effective third sector leadership (Kirchner, 2007; Cormack and Stanton, 2003, Chambers and Edwards-Stuart, 2007; Paton and Brewster, 2008). Other than third sector leaders being described as having wide-ranging and multifaceted skills to navigate within turbulent environments, they are also noted for their ability successfully to manage the passion and values of their workforce (Kirchner, 2006).

Some commentators have pushed for more resources to develop leadership skills with an attempt to address the 'leadership deficit' within the third sector (Kirchner, 2006). Even so, literature tends to be heavily focused on leadership being an individual role that has defining characteristics, and it is often over researched within large established TSOs. As Macmillan and McLaren (2012) highlight 'the accent remains on leadership as configured within individual organisations rather than leadership between organisations or across the third sector' (p.3-4). However, parts of the literature touch on the diversity of leadership. For example, Ockenden and Hutin (2008) explore leadership in small volunteer-led organisations, whilst Paton and Brewster (2008) recognise that the increased emphasis on partnership working across organisations and sectors has created a spectrum of leadership types. They suggest that from the blurring of sector boundaries, organisations have been pushed to develop new leadership skills, which has not only created varying types of leadership but also expanded complexities by forming additional power dynamics.

This thesis argues that leadership should not be conceptualised as a lone individual with a hierarchical position, and refrains from the notion of a 'heroic leader' (Kay, 1996). Instead, this thesis supports the conceptualisation by Kay (1996) of 'leadership as a multi-dimensional *process* of social interaction, creating and sustaining acceptable meanings of issues, events and actions' (p.131). This means rather than a downward facing process it explores how the interactions between individuals from all levels of the organisation (staff, volunteers, board) are involved in the meaning-making process. Kay describes the leadership process as being formed of four dimensions:

- *Social and cognitive*: this involves a sense-making process on issues and events, not only using one's own meanings, but also accepting the meanings by others
- *Socio-political process*: this involves encouraging the commitment towards particular meanings
- *A cultural process*: this involves embedding particular meanings within an organisation's culture
- *The enactment process*: this refers to meanings being reproduced through actions.

This conceptualisation disputes leadership being constructed by one individual at the top, but argues it involves continuous negotiation through social interactions with various individuals, therefore, 'any account of leadership has to take account of this context of social relations; as well as the cultural context within which the meaning-making process is taking place' (p.134).

One method of exploring this negotiation of leadership is by looking at the meaning-making process used within narrative, or more creatively, the role of 'storytelling' by leaders (Schwabenland, 2006). Schwabenland describes the importance of leaders telling organisational stories, particularly the founding story, which can construct and reinforce the values and commitment of the organisation's members. This means some individuals are labelled as 'leaders', but individuals from different levels are involved in this leadership process through the act of storytelling, to interrelate and interpret the meanings. As Schwabenland describes, this is intended to 'provide a means to structure

our thinking so that our interpretation can be located in an ongoing narrative in which there is some underlying logic, rationale or plot to link events' (p. 171). This practice of storytelling can enhance the leader's strategic position and be influential in the direction of organisational change.

An additional endogenous dynamic within TSOs is the concept of governance, which has again seen a considerable advance in third sector literature. Governance here refers to the organisational-level and has been defined as 'the structures, systems and processes concerned with ensuring the overall direction, control and accountability of an organisation' (Cornforth, 2004: 1). Literature on third sector governing bodies tends to be conceptualised as focusing on the role, responsibilities, composition and behaviour of the board. Whilst previous research tends to focus on the relationships between the board and senior management, it has been noted to ignore specific relationships, such as, between the Chair and CEO (Cornforth and Macmillan, 2016). Governance also includes additional systems and procedures within an organisation that are performed not only by the board and senior management, but also the staff and, on occasion, the volunteers (Cornforth, 2012). As TSOs are increasingly having to demonstrate that they operate in an efficient and effective manner, they are faced with the challenge of meeting the governing functions from various stakeholders (alliances, partners, funders, beneficiaries) (ibid).



Some commentators have debated the functions of a board and the conflicting dynamics it can create within an organisation (Harris, 1996), mainly in the staff and board relationship (Cornforth and Edwards, 1999; Reid and Turbide, 2011). For example, Cornforth and Simpson (2002) highlight that 'concern has focused in particular on the boundary between the roles of the board and management. Staff accuse boards either of meddling in the affairs of management or conversely of not being involved enough and serving a largely symbolic function' (p.451). Commentators distinguish the importance of effective governance (Paton et al., 2007), and the increased emphasis placed on organisations demonstrating accountability through transparent governance, partially explained by the growth of contracting out public services. Similar to literature on leadership, research tends to focus on individual large established organisations and discusses the disadvantages for small organisations to achieve effective governance. For example, Rochester (2003) describes a range of governance challenges for small organisations, such as, difficulties in recruiting trustees, the ability of trustees to undertake their responsibilities, and the senior management not having capacity to input into developing the board. Cornforth and Spear (2010) bring another perspective on governance by recognising the advance and growth of a variety of hybrid organisations, which changes the shape and form of governance structures. These governance structures are thought to become more complex as organisations increasingly work in partnership with the public and private sector, or when setting up separate trading arms (social enterprise) and establishing an adjacent board.

The thesis aims to contribute empirical evidence on understanding changing organisational forms, and what prevents and encourages organisations to take on varying forms of hybrid organisation. The board should be understood by its voluntary nature, its influence on organisational direction and keeping focused on the mission. As Harris (1999) describes, the relationship between the board and staff 'is negotiated and renegotiated as circumstance and personalities change'. This is later expanded on by Cornforth and Macmillan (2016) who explore 'how this relationship is "negotiated" and develops over time in response to both contextual and situational changes' (p.2). These ideas echo the previous argument on understanding power dynamics through social interactions, the negotiation of meaning-making, and throughout multiple layers of an organisation. Governance is essential to understand the accountability, and to start to unravel the complexities and multi-faceted nature of organisations.

### **3.4.2. Workforce dynamics**

A well-referenced feature of TSOs that provide welfare services and advocacy are the core values and commitment to supporting the needs of marginalised social groups. It is these values that promote organisations' legitimacy and trustworthiness to service users and future commissioners. This is also viewed as an essential driving force for an organisation, adding value to the work and developing a strong and motivated 'work ethos' towards service provision. This 'work ethos' can be further fuelled by a feeling of wellbeing and altruism in helping those in need (Lipsky and Smith, 1990), and is a key driver when resources are squeezed and workloads intensified. These could prevent the risk of low work morale. Some literature argues this could be tampered with by 'funding

pressures and changing work regimes [which] are adversely impacting on employee turnover, commitment and morale,... as well as causing disenchantment and burnout' (James, 2011: 689). This thesis approaches this by exploring whether the organisation is successfully adapting, or if there are rising challenges and tensions within the organisation.

There is a stream of third sector literature that focuses on work conditions, primarily concentrating on changes the increase in outsourcing public services and the effect contractual arrangements have had on the work environment (James, 2011; Cunningham, 2014). It is not perceived as all negative, as some commentators recognize positive changes since TSOs were being described as 'unsophisticated' in regard to human resource management in comparison to the public sector (James, 2011). Recently, organisations have pushed for changes, such as implementing human resource policies and procedures, in an attempt to appear more attractive to stakeholders and adhere to contractual arrangements. The downside of introducing terms and conditions could be adversely impacting on the employment work conditions, or otherwise referred to as creating a 'poorer employment regime'. James (2011) highlights that the strong values and work ethos can sometimes be mistreated by employers, or what Leat (1993) identifies as an 'ethos discount', resulting in TSOs having weaker forms of terms and conditions in comparison to the public sector.

Other commentators discussing deteriorating work conditions are mainly from the social care field, highlighting themes of internal dynamics and practices that require further

exploration in other fields. For example, concern has been raised about commissioning arrangements by: producing work intensification (Cunningham and James, 2009); 'workplace insecurity, staff burnout and turnover' (Cunningham et al., 2014); and an emphasis on job insecurity (Cunningham et al., 2014). Cunningham (2008) argues that the competitive nature of commissioning can push employers to go as low as possible to produce competitive prices, but this mainly accelerates the 'race to the bottom'. He describes the experiences of organisations having to re-tender as a 'gathering storm', with the rising pressures creating emotional upheaval and accentuating insecurity. He indicates there is only so much commitment an employee can give, driven by their work ethos and values, before overstretched resources and work intensification takes its toll and is detrimental to workforce morale (Cunningham et al., 2014). Not only can this produce negative effects on employees' work conditions, but also have an impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of the workforce and the quality of services provided (Cunningham and Nickson, 2011; FSI, 2016).

Research on social work can also help an understanding of the challenges and pressures on work conditions experienced by front line employees, with particular attention to literature on the refugee field. Recent literature by Robinson (2013a, 2013b) compares experiences of social workers in refugee TSOs in the UK and Australia demonstrating pressures from work intensification, high demand, and trying to keep up-to-date with complex immigration policies. This literature illustrates additional burdens faced by these employees: particularly a high emotional demand from supporting clients with traumatic experiences. Other research highlights ASRs having complex cases involving torture and

trauma, which can result in physical or mental health concerns (see Van der Veer, 1998; Briskman and Cemlyn, 2005).

Robinson found on top of the deteriorating practical side of the work conditions, the daily exposure to hearing traumatic experiences from the service users was creating strain on the employees' emotional wellbeing. Her research demonstrated how supervision was essential to support front-line staff in these challenging conditions 'to provide a safe space to reflect on the work, to ensure the long term wellbeing and motivation of workers, minimise the risk of burnout' (2013a: 6). However, resultant from cutbacks, lack of resources and high demand, these employees' needs could not be adequately met. She argues 'this study reflected concerns related to working with a highly marginalized user group that requires a complex repertoire of skills, both externally facing in relation to policy, politics and public accountability, and internally facing in relation to dealing with fractured organisational responsibilities and individual trauma' (2013b: 95). A clear concern was that the result of these multiple pressures experienced by the workforce could lead to high staff turnover, burnout, and sick leave, which would be to the detriment of service users trying to access already oversubscribed and limited service provision.

Numerous challenges have been identified to working in refugee organisations, such as, language barriers, complex needs, xenophobic attitudes, moral and legal dilemmas, limited service provision and high demand. Even so, the positives of working in the refugee field are argued to outweigh the negatives. Guhan et al (2011) suggest that in

addition to organisational values, the individual's personal beliefs and interests in equality and humanitarian issues were essential driving forces for workforce commitment and morale. Positive responses by the service users, such as gratitude and satisfaction, were also key features shown to solidify these beliefs. They claimed 'staff's own personal background, culture, resources, and life experiences influenced their ability to deal with work' (p.221); empirical findings in Chapter Nine will explore these internal dynamics in-depth to understand organisational behaviour.

This section has drawn out different ways of unpacking the internal dynamics and practices within an organisation, how these are driving forces for organisational change, and create conditions to either maintain the dynamics or develop internal tensions. It identifies the need for more empirical evidence of organisational change to explore the range of internal dynamics and practices and the influence this has on shaping organisational form. Therefore, this thesis will aim to answer the secondary question:

***5) What dynamics within the organisation are influential on the organisational processes?***

### **3.5. Emergence of the asylum seeker and refugee third sector**

Section 2.4.2 outlines the changes in immigration policy that have encouraged the development of refugee agencies emerging across the UK. This is not to say ASR agencies did not exist before the dispersal programme came into effect (Carey-Wood et al., 1997; Zetter and Pearl, 2000), as TSOs and faith groups have been involved in

resettlement during the long history of migration to the UK. There were already a number of established organisations within London. The growth of organisations across the UK (Griffiths et al., 2005), has been argued to be in response to the failure in mainstream services (Wren, 2007) and their role in providing support and assisting integration. Extensive literature describes the emergence of these organisations, generally referred to as refugee community organisations (RCOs) (Zetter and Pearl, 2000; Griffiths et al., 2005; Zetter et al., 2005; Lukes, 2009; Phillimore and Goodson, 2010). At the time the political agenda was encouraging and supportive of the advance of these organisations, due to the Labour government focusing on multiculturalism and positively recognising the role these organisations played in integration.

This term RCO, refers to 'local, ethnically based voluntary organisations with a specific remit in relation to refugees and asylum seekers' (Griffiths et al., 2005: 52), and the organisations themselves could vary from 'one-person shows to complex and sophisticated bureaucratic structures' (p. 188). The organisations have been noted to vary by form, rates of development and approach to activities (Wren, 2007), although sharing similar characteristics, such as, being ad-hoc, informal support services, lacking in formal legal status and a professional core of staff resulting in organisational instability (Zetter and Pearl, 2000). The common feature is that the organisations are set up *by* ASR and, are subsequently, *for* ASR (Zetter and Pearl, 2000). The organisations have precarious survival rates due to short-term funding, or often seed corn funding (Phillimore, 2012), limiting the stable conditions necessary to develop and expand. This might explain why literature on RCOs 'tends to focus on the emergence of such groups, generating

‘empirical snapshots’ of associations at the early stages of their development’ (Piacentini 2012: 3). Whilst Piacentini’s research focuses on how immigration status changes over time, this thesis echoes this idea that literature tends to concentrate on the early stages of the emergence of organisations, consequently generating a gap in the literature on organisational development.

These refugee-led organisations have been noted to differ in organisational form by location. RCOs based in London are recorded as being established registered charities, having formalised funding regimes, and having undergone organisational change to adapt to the bureaucratic requirements of various stakeholders and funding bodies (Griffiths et al., 2005; Zetter et al., 2005). However, there is blurring over the use of the definition of RCOs and the organisations to which it is applied. This can be problematic when using broad brush labelling in policy making (Alcock, 2013) and for organisations that want to differentiate themselves from others. As a result of organisational development, gaining expertise and experience, and organisations faced with a rapidly changing and turbulent environment, it is arguable regional organisations have changed, although this is significantly underrepresented in the literature. It is beneficial that research explores these organisational developments, rather than portraying the sector as a homogenous group.

### **3.5.1. The wider asylum seeker and refugee sector**

Even though RCOs only constitute a part of the refugee sector, literature tends to focus on this organisation type, or the large national-level organisations, Refugee Action and Refugee Council. This highlights a gap in literature on the middle ground of the refugee



sector - local formalised refugee specific TSOs, which may or may not be established by refugee individuals or groups. The introduction of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and establishing NASS encouraged a new era, with the Home Office subcontracting the two national organisations to deliver a range of services, echoing the trends at the time from Labour. Consequently, these organisations had the monopoly of support and funding from the government (Zetter et al., 2005), for example, the Refugee Council took a leading role with NASS, whereas Refugee Action was the main contractor for the Refugee Employment Integration Services (RIES). These new government contracts were of a considerable size, for example the Refugee Council received approximately £23 million to deliver asylum support in 2004-5. In 2011, the Refugee Council continued to be heavily dependent on Home Office funding that comprised 78% of its £20.1 million revenue (Hill, 2011). These large contracts and the prime contracting model was used by the government to move away from support provided on an informal ad hoc basis to a more formal and measured process, and was fundamental in reshaping the refugee sector. This changed the nature for the two national organisations, to conform to contract requirements and undergo professionalization (Sale, 2007). In particular, there was concern that this would shift the focus of the organisations away from campaigning and lobbying (Griffiths et al., 2005; McGhee et al., 2016), and the fine balancing act of not straying from their initial mission.

The monopolisation of resources and support from the government by the national organisations restrained other ASR organisations from adopting a more substantial role or having room for expansion within the refugee sector. Some smaller organisations

managed to be involved in delivering these main contracts albeit much further down the supply chain as sub-contractors (McGhee et al., 2016), and this would have been an advantageous experience in developing skills and expertise in undertaking contracts. Furthermore, for those involved in delivering some part of the NASS and RIES contracts, a whole new arena of partnership working 'between the central state, local authority, and the private and voluntary sector' was opened up (Zetter et al., 2005). On the other hand, although this revenue would have been beneficial for some organisations (particularly in a sector with limited funds), Briskman and Cemyln (2005) found some organisations refused to be part of these contract arrangements. These organisations did not want to be associated with supporting the Home Office, due to the negative connotations of no-choice dispersal or detention centres.

However, in recent years the ASR sector has faced detrimental public expenditure cutbacks, the most notable being the Refugee Council being targeted with cuts of 61.7% in 2011, resulting in a loss of 300 staff members (a third of the workforce) and closure of two of its seven centres (Hill, 2011). Refugee Action also faced detrimental cuts, losing '63% to our One Stop Service (OSS) and 50% to our Initial Accommodation Wraparound Service from April 2011' (Refugee Action, 2011). Of particular significance has been the termination of funding for RIES and major reductions to ESOL in September 2011, which Refugee Action claimed meant the ending of refugee integration within the UK (Refugee Action, 2011). These cutbacks were criticised for the speed of implementation, giving little opportunity for the organisations to recover and find substitute funding, and for being disproportionate to the cuts generally implemented by the Home Office (Hills, 2011). To

further drive down costs the Home Office retendered its remaining contracts with Refugee Action and Refugee Council, which they either lost or refused to tender for, due to heavy restrictions that would put in question organisational autonomy. Consequently, the two national-level organisations have had to make significant reductions to their service provision, which has impacted on the sector's overall scope, relationships and unity. For example, the refugee sector across the UK has seen a decline in essential employment and integration services, which due to lack of funds and capacity has not been subsequently replaced.

With the RIES contract being terminated and in need of revenue to continue operating, Refugee Action undertook a grant to deliver the assisted voluntary returns (AVR) programme. This has seen lively debate due to the sensitive and questionable nature of the programme and 'whether the receipt of or dependency on statutory funding has or will lead to these VSOs compromising their advocacy and campaigning roles' (McGhee et al., 2016: 29). A recent study by McGhee et al. (2016) discusses this controversial issue of TSOs delivering services that are, firstly funded by the Home Office, and secondly focused on sending ASR back to their home country. TSOs need to be independent and have the ability to lobby against the Home Office, to advocate effectively for the rights of groups who are continually marginalised from welfare provision. Their study also highlights a number of features that support the need for further research in this field due to: the underrepresentation of research in this area; the increasingly hostile attitudes towards migration by the government; the heterogeneity within the sector; and refugee organisations needing not to be perceived as dependent on statutory revenue.

### **3.5.2. Organisational change in the asylum seeker and refugee third sector**

Literature on the emergence of RCOs describes the government encouraging organisations to take responsibility for providing support and promoting integration for new arrivals, however this was not met with sufficient public funds for local organisations. Instead, several barriers prevented organisations from promoting integration, such as, limited capacity or resources to deliver services, and having to refocus resources to provide reactive work to meet the immediate needs of beneficiaries (Wren, 2007; Griffiths et al., 2006). As Phillimore and Goodson (2010) point out 'RCOs main contribution relate[s] to meeting the survival needs of their community members rather than having any policy influence' (p.184). It has been argued that the ad hoc informal nature of the service provision provides little opportunity to tackle long-term integration, as TSOs are 'compelled...to respond to the immediate needs of AS, rather than the longer-term settlement needs of refugees...RCOs may now actually perpetuate their marginal position on the edges of their communities' (p. 176).

Literature highlights the challenging environment for RCOs to develop into formalized organisations (Wren, 2007; Zetter et al., 2005). For example, Phillimore and Goodson (2010) distinguish internal and external barriers that may prevent RCOs from organisational development, as they describe 'barriers appear to be structural and relate to the failure of institutions to adapt to the needs of emerging communities' (p.189). For example, the RCOs' lack of skills, expertise and capacity may prohibit them from accessing more formal funding sources, or undertaking the monitoring and evaluation

systems required. In particular, the RCOs were disadvantaged by their inability to attract funding in an environment of scarce resources, by not only competing against more formalized organisations, but also a well-established and resolute BME sector (Gameledin–Adhami et al., 2002). A similar premise is evident in wider third sector literature on the disadvantages experienced by small organisations in a rapidly developing competitive funding regime (see section 4.3.2). As a consequence, RCOs in dispersal areas at that time ‘retain[ed] an informal, non-institutionalized and marginal status’ (Zetter et al., 2005), due to lack of resources, being newly established, or resistant to taking on formalized operations and bureaucratic systems. This is evidenced by refusing to work with the Home Office, fear of ‘goal displacement’ (Zetter et al., 2005; Wren 2007), resulting in organisations adopting more ‘fluid institutional forms and weak associations with institutions’ (Phillimore and Goodson, 2010: 184)

A recent study by MacKenzie et al. (2012) provides one of the few empirical studies of RCOs undergoing a process of formalisation. They claim that in recent years the growth of EU migrants accessing services, and some organisations successfully diversifying their funds, has influenced some RCOs to deliver public services. In particular advice services have expanded to meet the demand and broad range of needs. They describe the rolling back of the state being mirrored by the growth of these organisations filling the void of mainstream provision, and with new funding regimes demanding bureaucratic systems, organisations have adopted a formalised response. However, there is concern organisations will have less capacity and fewer resources for lobbying and campaigning. Smaller RCOs that concentrate on raising awareness, lobbying and campaigning, will

have limited opportunity to undergo formalisation and expand into larger service providers (ibid).

MacKenzie et al. (2012) unpack the 'structural constraints' within the environment, as consisting of: the dispersal programme; public expenditure cutbacks; negative immigration rhetoric; and the precarious nature of the service users' immigration status that influenced the organisations operations and development. Of most significance is the increasingly competitive funding regime encouraged by the statutory revenue and the bureaucratic demands required from this. They describe how some RCOs have strategically responded by undergoing a process of formalization, to create a more attractive appearance to compete competitively for other types of funding stream. This has helped them to maintain their sustainability, and places them in an advantageous position over more informal RCOs. For one support group it allowed them 'to develop and to gain a higher profile, accessing such funds necessarily also entailed meeting a specific set of externally imposed goals and objectives, thus reinforcing the organisational formalisation' (p.640). The organisational change includes, developing capacity, structure and expertise, and understanding the rules of the game necessary to operate in an increasingly competitive environment. Further research is required to understand how and why some organisations have been able successfully to undergo this transition in such challenging times.

Although advantages are recognised by more formalised funding regimes promoting diversity, enhancing sustainability, and allowing the expansion of services, fears of 'goal

displacement' were echoed in this research. There was concern organisations no longer have the flexibility to react to emerging needs or the same level of proximity to beneficiaries (MacKenzie et al., 2012). The research notes that this can be a driving force for some RCOs to resist undergoing a process of formalisation, and instead remain focused on their missions and values. Other challenges described were 'in a competitive funding environment, the possibility of some organisations being squeezed out in terms of resource allocation led to tensions in the relationship between agencies ostensibly pursuing a shared agenda, reflecting a structural constraint on both the sustainability of some groups and on the development of service provision more generally' (p.642). In particular, the relationships between formal and informal organisations were found to be fraught with tensions, due to the perception formal organisations were more attractive when bidding for funding, which was further strained by having to compete for scarce resources. This was found to discourage cooperation between organisations and even, in some cases, hoarding of relevant information.

These outlined 'structural constraints' are relevant to understand the influences of the wider environment on organisational change. However MacKenzie et al. (2012) also argue 'to not privilege structure at the expense of agency' (p.634). This highlights how institutional forces can be over emphasized, although they continue to explain 'yet equally we must be sensitive to the contextual realities that shape the articulation of agency' (p.634). Their research focused on the role of agency in raising the public profile in organisations, which illustrated the important role actors and agency played in how organisations managed the 'structural constraints'. Although organisations are set in

similar contextual environments how they manage their surroundings varies by the different ways they are interpreted. This results in different degrees of formalized organisation, and thus producing different organisational forms, shapes and sizes. This method of using a combination of the two, looking at both institutional forces and agency, will be applied to this research to understand the development in organisational change, with the intention of providing a more insightful and meaningful account of the phenomenon.

### **3.5.3. Summary**

This chapter has demonstrated a number of limitations with the literature that the study will address. It highlights the underrepresentation of local formalised refugee organisations, of a small to medium size, and the development of organisational change that has taken place within this sub-sector. By exploring this area it will provide insight into how and why ASR TSOs are evolving and the role they are playing in filling the void within the refugee sector and service provision. For example, will they 'blow caution to the wind' to become heavily dependent on statutory funding given the evidence of the vulnerable position of the two national-level organisations? Also, how far will organisations undertake this formalised response and what explains the variety of responses? The ASR third sector literature provides information on how organisations are embedded within a wider context, more broadly the refugee sector, but also particular 'barriers' and 'structural constraints' that influence organisational development in different ways.



This part has identified a number of gaps within the refugee third sector literature, mainly on organisational change, formal local refugee organisations, and changes to service provision. Therefore, the primary research question has been developed to fill this gap and contribute to wider knowledge:-

- ***‘How and why are formal local asylum seeker and refugee third sector organisations reshaping service delivery in response to external pressures?’***

## **CHAPTER FOUR. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **4. Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an outline of the analytical framework that will be applied to the empirical findings. This is founded on principles drawn from institutional theory in recognition of its significant contribution to analysis of organisational change. In the last forty years there have been some major developments in institutional theory, such as, the shift from institutional isomorphism to heterogeneity in organisational response, acknowledging the role of multiple logics, and the growing emphasis on bringing back actors and agency into the analysis.

Rather than focusing on one element of institutional theory, this research is adopting a multi-level analytical approach - macro, meso, micro - due to the belief that organisational change is complex and multi-layered in organisational settings. The chapter first explores organisational change from the perspective of exogenous pressures through the concept of isomorphism. Secondly, theoretical underpinnings of institutional logics are outlined to understand how organisations can resist isomorphic pressure and adopt varying responses by drawing on multiple logics. Thirdly, the chapter argues the need for emphasis on the role of actors and agency in organisational change and brings in the recent stream of theoretical development on institutional work. Finally, the chapter argues that a greater emphasis should be on the micro-level analysis, in particular developing a further level of analysis: 'the deepest bottom layer'. This celebrates the messiness of

organisational forms, consisting of multiple compartments, and the importance of including values and emotional factors into the analysis.

#### **4.1. Institutional theory**

The advance of organisation theory has been a long journey, with some key milestones in its development that have been fundamental in understanding and explaining organisational change. In particular, two key articles have been pioneering in the shift from old institutionalism to new sociological institutionalism in the last 30 years, by developing the theoretical approach to the study of organisations. First, Meyer and Rowan (1977) were interested in why organisations appeared to adopt similar formal structures, such as, purposes, policies, procedures and positions, whilst rejecting the idea that structural change was primarily due to organisational efficiency in 'technical work'. Instead, they argued that organisations conformed to institutional rules within an environment, and subsequently shaped organisations to look structurally similar.

Institutionalised rules are guidelines for behaviour that are adopted by a collective of individuals. By adopting 'a formal structure that adheres to the prescriptions of myths in the institutional environment, an organisation demonstrates that it is acting on collectively valued purposes in a proper and adequate manner' (ibid, p.349). The rationale for adopting structural similarities is to conform to these myths and symbols associated with institutionalised rules, and 'incorporating externally legitimated formal structures increases the commitment of internal participants and external constituents' (ibid: 349). However, an important part of their argument was the notion that organisations may

appear to share similar formal structures, albeit this could be done in a ceremonious manner. They describe how the 'structural elements are only loosely linked to each other and to activities, rules are often violated, decisions are often implemented, or if unimplemented have uncertain consequences, technologies are of problematic efficiency, and evaluation and inspection systems are subverted or rendered so vague as to provide little coordination' (1977: 343). They believe an organisation wants to appear to conform with the intention of being treated in a certain manner, however, it still needs to undertake its practical activity, therefore 'uses its legitimacy to strengthen its support and secure its survival' (p. 349).

The second founding article, by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) describes the homogenisation of organisations, where 'bureaucratization and other forms of organisational change occur as a result of processes that make organisations more similar without necessarily making them more efficient' (p.147). Whereas Meyer and Rowan's concept of isomorphism focused on the societal-level, DiMaggio and Powell were interested in the structural dynamics of organisational fields. Their theoretical framework is underpinned by describing three institutional sectors, the state, the professionals, and the market as sources for rationalisation of organisational change, and their perception of how it is externally legitimised by external stakeholders. These influences are also thought subsequently to produce three different forms of organisational isomorphism in organisational fields. These are:

- **Coercive isomorphism-** from pressures in the external environment, generally the government

- **Mimetic isomorphism-** organisations model themselves on others as a response to uncertainty
- **Normative isomorphism-** from similar professions and a process of professionalisation creating internal influences.

Although these theoretical frameworks provide fundamental principles they have been argued to be rather limiting, by not acknowledging the agency of organisations, or the role of other institutional sectors as a source of rationalisation (Thornton et al., 2012). Furthermore, both old and new institutionalism disputes the influence of actions by individuals on organisational behaviour. In particular, the new institutionalist perspective rejects the idea that individuals intentionally strive for collective action. Instead, the theory argues individuals operating in an institutionalised environment adopt an ‘unreflective, routine, taken-for granted nature’ (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991: 14) towards their actions. This perception will be challenged later on, by highlighting how actors play a conscious role in human agency through their beliefs and values.

This research also queries the overriding emphasis on institutional isomorphism and organisations homogenising structural forms. This is not to say it does not happen to some degree but section 3.2.1 shows evidence that suggests the third sector consists of a vast range of organisational forms, shapes and sizes. Various commentators have tried to expand on these neo-institutional principles, including Oliver’s (1991) typologies on different organisational strategic responses, and Beckert’s (2010) view that some organisations respond to the competitive environment through divergence and creating a

niche position. Beckert (2010) asserts that instead of converging on a single model, organisations 'attempt to specialize, to occupy a niche for themselves not occupied by a competitor, and thereby create product heterogeneity in the market' (p.161). Although these arguments start to unpack varying organisational behaviour, there is little insight on how and why different organisational forms are produced, or on the role of actors and agency. For example, Pache and Santos (2010) are critical of Oliver's typology of organisational responses due its perspective of organisations 'as unitary actors developing strategic responses to outside pressures' (p.457), with no recognition of institutional complexity (Bertels and Lawrence, 2016) or understanding of the internal dynamics and processes of an organisation.

#### **4.2. Institutional logics**

Recognising the limitations of earlier work, Friedland and Alford (1991) argued not only for bringing society back into the institutional analysis, but also identifying a wider range of institutions - capitalist market, bureaucratic state, nuclear family, and Christian religion - which they labeled as the inter-institutional system. These various institutions are each described as having their own logic, 'a set of material practices and symbolic constructions - which constitutes its organizing principles and which is available to organisations and individuals to elaborate' (1991: 248). It is these theoretical principles that led to the conceptualisation of institutional logics, how society consists of multiple institutional logics, and this action of drawing on different multiple logics can result in adopting varying responses to organisational change. This explained why organisational change happens and began to demonstrate examples of organisational heterogeneity.

In contrast to the previous isomorphic arguments, Friedland and Alford rejected the notion that individuals undertook mindless everyday practice, although it was thought to happen to some degree. They brought back the role of agency by demonstrating how action relates to the organising principles associated with institutional logics, and each inter-institutional system has its own institutional order. For example 'the institutional logic....of religion, or science for that matter, is truth, whether mundane or transcendental, and the symbolic construction of reality within which all human activity takes place.....Contemporary Christian religions attempt to convert all issues into expressions of absolute moral principles accepted voluntarily on faith and grounded in a particular cosmology' (p. 248-249). By highlighting the multiple logics available this provides individuals with the agency to select which of the institutional logics to draw upon for social action and interaction (ibid).

This societal-level analysis has been developed by institutional logic scholars, aiming to understand the different orders of institutional practice on individuals and organisations, albeit with a much stronger focus on politics, power, agency and change (Thornton et al., 2012). Thornton and Ocasio (1999) were key in developing the principles of Friedland and Alford and formulated their definition of institutional logics 'as the socially constructed, historical patterns of cultural symbols and material practices, assumptions, values and beliefs by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organizing time and space, and provide daily activity' (Thornton et al., 2012: p. 51). Institutional logics refer to the institutional orders that govern the actions of institutions in society, by following commonly shared guidelines that inform sense-making of the institutions. Furthermore,

each institution has its own preference and interests that shape the belief systems and common practices that organise behaviour. Literature emphasises that culture consists of multiple institutional logics and it is the action of actors drawing on different logics that create varying responses to organisational change. However, this interaction between the multiple logics is generally described as being dominating, competing or co-existing with one another, described in turn below:

### ***Dominating***

Literature demonstrates an exploration of organisational change in different institutional regimes, including the transition from an editorial logic in the publishing industry to market logic (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999), colleges and universities (Gumpert, 2000), accounting firms (Lounsbury 2007, Thornton et al., 2005), and some literature on the third sector: for example, Coule and Patmore (2013); Hustinx et al., (2015); and Skelcher and Smith (2015). Although the theory of institutions recognises that multiple logics can be drawn upon, previous studies tend to focus on an institutional regime and two logics - the process of an old logic being replaced by a new logic. The introduction of a new institutional logic in a field is described to dominate and replace the existing institutional order, as a consequence of the logics being incompatible with one another. This explains the process of organisational change by the new logic presenting different behavioural guidelines for the organisations to follow (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999). Although this analogy can be useful in understanding particular contextual environments, such as changing politics and power dynamics, it is a rather restrictive view of organisational change and heavily founded on a macro perspective. This research argues that fields are



more complicated than previously described, as organisations are constructed of complex systems, multiple logics can be drawn upon and are not necessarily incompatible, therefore can create a multitude of organisational responses that require a much deeper level of analysis to understand.

### ***Complexity and competing***

Previous studies have been criticised for focusing on the interaction between two logics, rather than acknowledging the multiple logics that can be drawn upon and produce varying responses to organisational change (Greenwood, et al., 2011). A key development in institutional analysis is the emphasis on certain fields consisting of a multiplicity of logics within a context that then have varying influences on actors, creating what Greenwood et al. (2010) coined 'institutional complexity'. This term describes an environment that has become contested and complex in nature due to multiple competing institutional logics that can be drawn upon by actors. This has spurred a stream of research on individual organisations, to explore how organisations can respond in varying ways by drawing upon plural institutional logics and the complexity of interactions created between them (Greenwood et al., 2011). This explanation not only provides insight on what influences organisational change but also on creating heterogeneity in organisational response. Greenwood et al. (2011) provide an overview of research that covers a diverse range of features. They found research often focuses on organisational responses to institutional complexity as a struggle, by having to navigate between multiple logics that could have conflicting institutional demands (Denis et al., 2001). On the other hand, institutional complexity can also spur situations of improvisation and innovation, as

the actors interpret the new guidelines for behaviour (values, ideas, beliefs, practices) as a basis to be creative in organisational response (McPherson and Sauder, 2013; Smets et al., 2015).

Greenwood et al. (2011) put forth a multi-level analytical framework with the intention of fully understanding institutional complexity, arguing that organisational change is not only a response to an external 'jolt' (Meyer, 1982) but should be viewed as an ongoing process. This involves looking at the relationships between logics, fields and organisations, with the understanding that organisations experience complexity in varying degrees that will create heterogeneity in organisational change. In contrast to previous institutional analysis that focuses on the top down effects of institutional pressures, and logics that influence organisational behavior, Greenwood et al. argue that analysis should zoom in on the impact of the organisational responses. They suggest that how organisations respond to complexity can have a knock-on effect on the field structure or institutional pluralism. This research draws upon the analogy of a multi-level analytical framework, to shed light on the complexity of organisational change, and moves away from a top down approach. However, this research argues there are still missing levels to this analysis- the role of agency in organisational change and taking a directly bottom up approach.

## ***Co-existence***

Counter to the previous debate on institutional logics as either dominating or competing against one another, there has been an increase of interest in co-existence between multiple institutional logics over a period of time (e.g. Dunn and Jones, 2010; Reay and Hinings, 2009; Schneiberg and Clemens, 2006). Reay and Hinings (2009) criticise previous comments on organisational responses for being heavily focused on the effect of external pressures, and providing limited recognition of the role of the actors drawing on institutional logics and how they interpret this. Reay and Hinings found competing institutional logics do not have to result in one logic dominating another. Instead, by exploring the micro-level they found actors encouraged the co-existence of multiple logics, by applying structures and systems that created an environment where multiple logics could separately influence different behaviours and co-exist with one another.

A method found by Reay and Hinings to tackle competing logics was of organisations forming collaborative relationships with other external stakeholders. They describe 'rivalry between logics may be managed through collaborative relationships where the collaborators maintain their independence but work together to achieve a desired outcome' (p.245). This follows similar principles to Meyer and Rowan's notion of coupling, by describing how these localised systems and structures allowed the individuals to undertake everyday work, albeit surrounded by a number of competing logics. Other scholars have expanded on this notion of coupling, by actors appearing to have accepted a dominant logic at the field-level although at a micro-level actors continue to use the old logic in everyday practice. This can demonstrate a form of resistance (Townley, 1997), or

links between the two logics can become even tighter through a process of recoupling (Hallett, 2010).

### ***Hybridity***

Chapter Three provides a detailed account of the theoretical issues of organisational change such as hybridisation. What is salient here is how the 'hybrid' literature brings in principles of institutional logics to provide a more in-depth account on organisational change. More emphasis is placed on 'looking inside' organisations to provide insight on how actors interpret a situation, and consequentially act on this, which has been used to explain varying forms of hybrid organisations. Pache and Santos (2013) found that organisations combine different parts of logics that influence certain behaviour, and therefore create varying organisational forms. This process has been rationalised in terms of gaining legitimacy from varying external stakeholders associated with the different logics. Skelcher and Smith (2015) also bring in the notion of multiple institutional logics to understand varying forms of hybridity, creating typologies of different forms- segmented, segregated, assimilated, blended, and blocked. This movement in theoretical debate is evidently bringing back the agency of organisations, highlighting the complexity and multi-layered dynamics of organisations, which enables them to interpret and navigate a complex environment of various challenges (Brandsen and Karre, 2011).

The recent wave of theoretical development in institutionalist theory has concentrated on moving institutions and actors to the centre of analysis (Bertels and Lawrence, 2016),

with the emphasis on viewing institutions as inhabited (Hallett, 2010; Hallett and Ventresca, 2006). Bertels and Lawrence (2016) argue that to understand this process it is important to acknowledge ‘the people in organisations whose thoughts, feelings, and actions will animate those responses’ (p.5). Organisations can be thought of as complex organisms, involving varying layers, systems and dynamics, which locate individuals in particular settings within an organisation, although these different parts are found to overlap. Consequently, these alternative parts within the organisation may undergo their own process of hybridization, and as Hustinx et al. (2015) point out, the process of hybridization can be experienced differently by the actors within the organisations i.e. volunteers and staff.

### **4.3. Institutional Work**

Although actors and agency have been brought back into the analysis of organisational change (Reays and Hinings, 2009; Bertels and Lawrence, 2016), by highlighting the individual’s role of drawing on varying logics, a number of flaws have been identified. Firstly, descriptions of organisational responses are often restricted to a narrow range of institutional logics (Klein, 2015) that constrain the diversity and heterogeneity of organisational form, and are not acknowledging the breadth and complexity of organisational change. Klein describes this as the ‘machine-like depiction of institutional logics devised by organisational scholars [which] has confined variation and change to a schema of a finite set of combinations’ (ibid, p.327). Secondly, there is a lack of understanding of the actors’ role in organisational change. In response, this research is

interested in opening up the 'black box' of organisational change to examine the 'inside' dynamics, systems and practices, and also explore how organisational response is underpinned by the individuals' values, beliefs, motivations and emotions. Bringing these features to the foreground and illustrating how they produce their own form of logics moves analysis away from viewing institutional logics as the prime governing factor, and celebrates the actors' role in interpreting the environment and influencing organisational behaviour.

A number of studies have tried to address these limitations in neo-institutionalism, by focusing on the relationship between institutions and actions through the recent notion of 'institutional work'. The purpose is to reorient the actors' role and actions as a key influence on institutions and organisational settings (Acheson, 2014), and to highlight the impact of agency as an essential level of analysis. The concept of institutional work is described as 'the purposive action of individuals and organisations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions' (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006: 215). There is some third sector literature around this, such as Coule and Patmore's (2013) argument that non-profit organisations are typically overlooked in regard to influencing institutions due to not being perceived as consisting of sources of power. Instead, they found by looking at the micro-level of institutional work in non-profit organisations, one organisation was shaped by maintenance concerns and the other transformational interests, and were able to effect the 'rules of the game' at the field level by exploiting different logics and access to resources. In comparison to Coule and Patmore's approach, which follows a more macro perspective on wider logics influencing institutional work, other third sector

commentators have used the principles to focus on understanding the internal processes of hybridisation in TSOs (Hustinx et al., 2015). Lawrence et al. (2011) to distinguish several components in understanding what contributes as institutional work - intentionality, effort and reflexivity.

### ***Intentionality***

Rather than actors passively conforming to institutions, this theoretical development explores how actors actively engage in processes, practices and discourse, by using various levels of reflexivity and intentionality (Battilana and D'Aunno, 2009). This is a shift from previous descriptions of actors behaving in a 'taken-for-granted' manner to mundane activity, as it highlights how some actions have an underlying purpose to influence institutions (Lawrence et al., 2009). By doing so it brings back the intentional aspect to action, as individuals are described as 'culturally competent actors with strong practical skills and sensibility who creatively navigate within their organisational fields' (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006: 220). This contrasts to previous views on isomorphism 'just happening'; instead the focus is on purposeful and intentional action, even the example of actors adopting myths and ceremonious behavior is perceived as intentional practice (Lawrence et al., 2011). Nevertheless, this purposeful action should also not be viewed as homogenous (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998).

## **Effort**

The definition of 'work' in institutional work is rather broad, presumably as it is a relatively new concept and current research is still adding to the debate. Lawrence et al's (2011) account of institutional work highlights the second defining feature as 'effort', which they describe could 'involve physical or mental effort aimed at affecting an institution or set of institutions' (p.53). Lawrence and Suddaby's (2006) earlier work looks in more depth at sociological principles of 'practice', which is applied to this research due to being a more tangible means to measure effort. The focus on practice is 'shared routines of behavior' (Whittington, 2006: 619) that are aimed at creating, maintaining or disrupting institutions. However, rather than focusing on the actual engagement of activity itself, it 'refers to actors' efforts to affect the recognition and acceptance of sets of routines' (Zietsma and Lawrence, 2010: 191). This notion of practice is essential in shifting the focus onto everyday work, whilst also zooming in on what actors actually do and the rationale behind this. Thornton et al. (2012) also differentiate individual and organisational behaviour associated with institutional logics, between activities and practices - 'a distinction is often made between *activity*, which refers to a set of meaningful behaviours or everyday work, and *practice* which refers to a set of meaningful activities that are informed by wider cultural beliefs' (p. 128).

These conceptualisations recognise practice as situated or embedded within an institutional framework. Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) assert that instead of actors having autonomous agency the 'practice perspective highlights the creative and knowledgeable work of actors which may or may not achieve its desired ends and which



interacts with existing social and technological structures in unintended and unexpected ways' (p.219). Rather than actors behaving in a completely autonomous manner, their behaviour is rationalised by legitimacy considerations and a means for survival. This also includes observing practice that is intent on maintaining institutions (Zilber, 2011), in the words of Lawrence et al. (2011) 'enacted in the everyday getting by of individuals and groups who reproduce their roles, rites, and rituals at the same time that they challenge, modify, and disrupt them' (p.57).

### ***Reflexivity***

Finally, Lawrence et al. (2011) state that it is not only a matter of outlining how actors do things differently - through creating, maintaining, disrupting institutions, which becomes legitimatised as a new way of working, but also about actors being reflexive of their practices and developing new ways of seeing things. Referring back to Meyer and Rowan's (1977) notion of myths and ceremony, they claim rather than a process of coupling, the actors are intentionally challenging these myths to navigate across different institutional logics. To enable researchers to unpack this different approach to understanding organisational responses, the focus needs to move away from the outcomes and 'what and when', to a more insightful analysis on practices and processes by exploring the 'how and why' (Lawrence et al., 2011).

Observing and understanding these internal dynamics, practices and processes is a looking glass into understanding diversity in organisational change, and gaining a robust

picture of this phenomenon is a methodological matter. This is due to the shift in perception of viewing institutional change as the object of explanation, as institutional work concentrates on the experiences and motivations of the actors (Lawrence et al., 2011). Lawrence et al. (2013) add to methodological debates by stating that using interviews as a data collection method on institutional work is limited in understanding the day-to-day 'messiness' of the practice work. They argue that to fully unpack mundane practice at a micro-level analysis, an ethnographic approach is required to understand 'the experience of individuals as they engaged in, and were subjected to, institutional work' (p.1029). This explores the actors' reflexivity on their institutional work and seeing things differently, which highlights 'the actors' responsibility and morality'.

#### **4.4. The deepest bottom layer**

Institutional work has been applied in a number of areas including, organisational leadership (Kraatz, 2011), and discourse used by elite agents in a rape crisis centre (Zilber, 2011). However, the theoretical principles still seem focused on a single process of institutional change rather than celebrating the complexities of organisational form. This research argues that organisations consist of a number of levels, different departments, varying constructions of groups, diversity in individuals and relationships. Drawing on some of the hybridity literature (Skelcher and Smith, 2015) provides a useful means to understand how different layers within organisations can host varying forms of institutional work. For example, some practices could be maintaining institutions, whereas others are disrupting, which could result in a complex range of organisational forms. Arguably, the

different forms of institutional work being performed in the organisation could have varied effects on one another, such as, complement, compete, co-exist, evoke, inspire, struggle, and create varying organisational responses.

Understanding why there could be different forms of institutional work being undertaken within an organisation at the same time, requires the focus to zoom in even closer and explore the variations of the individuals and interactions. Although the institutional work principles promote a micro-level analysis the emphasis is still on how institutions are governing the actions of these actors. Furthermore, previous research tends to focus on key individuals, leaders or the elite, whereas this research highlights the strength of collective action from those in lower positions. Therefore, the research argues that a bottom up approach, of 'the deepest bottom layer', is required to generate detailed analysis on how the actors' features are influential on the organisational settings. Some recent literature echoes these thoughts on a micro-level analysis, with Klein (2015) arguing that too much emphasis is on the causal explanations of exogenous factors influencing organisational change, with little regard to the importance of values. Moisander et al. (2016) highlight gaps in literature on the role of emotions in processes of institutionalisation and on the 'emotional underpinnings of institutional work'. Overlooking the influences of values and emotions provides an incomplete account of the internal institutional processes and what shapes the everyday practices.

Moisander et al. (2016) focus on government discourse and how this is used to 'work' on the emotions of the audience, outlining three strategies - eclipsing, diverting and evoking emotion - subsequently describing this as 'emotion work'. Although this is more of a macro perspective of discourse, that is, how the government can use emotion work, this research applies the concept of emotion work to understand the micro-level dynamics of TSOs. In particular, it expands on section 3.4.2. which describes the emotional burden the workforce faces when hearing on a regular basis the services users' traumatic stories of torture, violence and persecution. The research is interested in how this story telling discourse can be used as emotion work, strengthening the moral purpose and driving commitment of the workforce, and fundamentally influencing the logics behind organisational behaviour.

Moisander et al. (2016) provide a useful definition of emotions, as 'complex, embodied but socially constructed structures of knowledge, feeling and ethical reasoning that guide and constrain the social action and interaction that underpins institutions' (p.18). They further unpack this by differentiating between:

- **Affective emotions:** commitments, bonds people have for things, people, places  
i.e. love and hate
- **Moral emotions:** pride, shame and moral concerns

This differentiation highlights how emotion work is not only limited to an individual but the interactions between actors that can create emotions and how these are managed. At an organisational-level the actors could use this collective emotion work to influence

institutional processes and organisational responses, due to building a moral purpose that rationalises and internally legitimates the behaviour (see section 8.3). Emotion work has the ability to shape the conditions of agency of organisational actors, which could enable, evoke, constrain, energise and build moral agency. Nevertheless, emotion work should not be viewed as the only explanation of organisational change, but it does provide an inseparable part to understanding the phenomenon by demonstrating 'the collective processes of ethical reasoning and legitimation through which institutions are created, maintained and disrupted' (Moisander et al., 2016: 3).

#### **4.5. Summary**

This chapter demonstrates the development and expansion of institutional theory on organisational studies, which provides the backdrop to elucidate the empirical findings from the research. The chapter has outlined a broad overview of the development rather than an in-depth description of the differing parts, as the research argues the importance of multi-level analysis due to highlighting multiple institutional logics and how these can be drawn upon in varying ways. The research pushes for a multi-level analytical framework to gain an all-round picture of organisational change, including both exogenous and endogenous factors, and celebrating the complexities of organisational form and its everyday messiness.

The recent development of the theoretical stream on institutional work provides useful analysis and insight into the role of actors in institutional change. It is a start to understanding how actors can draw on institutional logics, how human agency can

influence different organisational responses (creating, maintaining, disrupting), and that these actions are not mindlessly undertaken but undergo a process of reflexivity. Individuals are not only adopting a new way of working, but also developing a new way of thinking that could be a further driving force to organisational change and applying varying responses. However, this chapter has highlighted that the multi-level analytical framework is missing a layer, disregarding the exploration of the deepest layer of the organisational setting - the emotions and values. To undergo analysis from this perspective a bottom up approach needs to be applied, to untangle the emotions, values, beliefs, how these interrelate with one another and the influence this has on everyday practice. Doing this has clear methodological implications: of applying an ethnographic approach to provide an all-round perspective of the phenomenon (see Chapter Five) to observe the mundane, be immersed in the environment, and highlight the processes of reflexivity.

## **CHAPTER FIVE. METHODOLOGY**

This chapter outlines the methodological approach adopted to answer the research questions outlined in section 1.3. The aim of the study is to explore organisational change in ASR TSOs, therefore an in-depth case study approach is adopted using a qualitative strategy. This included using mixed methods, semi-structured interviews, ethnographic observations and conversations, and document analysis.

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the various stages in the research journey, the approach to ethical considerations, and the continuous process of reflexivity that aims to enhance the quality of the research. To do this the chapter will firstly explore the position that I take as a researcher, to outline the foundation that has influenced the approach and decisions in how to conduct the research. Secondly, the case study approach will be described, including the sampling process and how access was gained, and how principles from the ethnography tradition have been influential in the research design. Thirdly, the methods section will discuss why particular methods were selected, what data was gathered to answer the research questions, and any issues and challenges that emerged. Fourthly, the analytical process will provide an account of how the data was analysed, and the use of different methods to triangulate the data and establish the findings. The fifth section will illustrate the importance of reflexivity through the research process, and finally, the main ethical considerations will be discussed.

### **5.1. Where I position myself as a researcher?**

By outlining my beliefs about the nature of reality (ontological perspective) and beliefs about how to understand the nature of reality (epistemological perspective) it illustrates what I bring to the study and how this influences the underpinnings of the research project. Some commentators argue that individuals are not fixed to one identity or perspective, but different perspectives can be drawn upon throughout the research process (Butler-Kisber, 2010). In contrast to a positivist approach that claims there is a reality that exists independently to how individuals perceive it and objective social truths can be formed from this, my approach is situated within the interpretivist tradition. This claims research should focus on the lived experience of the world, particularly human actions and activities, and the beliefs and meanings attached to these. I believe reality is socially constructed by individuals through practice, interactions and experiences (Butler-Kisber, 2010), and each factor can influence how this is understood by individuals. Consequently, this means there cannot be one single reality. From an epistemological perspective I am interested in understanding the meanings and beliefs of individuals to understand how reality is understood. I am interested in 'the ways in which social reality is an ongoing accomplishment of social actors rather than something external to them and that totally constrains them' (Bryman, 2008: 20). Therefore, I argue researchers should spend time 'in the field' that is being investigated rejecting natural science methods, to gain a more insightful account of the environment the individuals are situated within, understanding the specific culture and historical period (Butler-Kisber, 2010), and why this is influential on the individual's experiences.



From this perspective exploring everyday interactions, the continuous processes of negotiation, and multifaceted perspectives, is essential to understand why and how certain human behaviour exists. To do this the research tries to understand how the respondents interpret and understand the social world (in this case the operating environment and organisational work undertaken) through socially constructed meanings and beliefs. Organisational change is understood through the perspective of the participants, what they identify as the key influential features in the environment, and their experiences of change in activities, relationships and the work place. Multiple perspectives are sought to triangulate the information, to understand the various processes and practices, and whether there are social meanings and beliefs that are underpinning shared perspectives of the reality.

In comparison to the positivist tradition that views the researcher as independent and value free from the investigated topic, the interpretivist tradition claims researchers cannot be separated from observing reality nor should participants be viewed as free from researcher bias. Snape and Spencer (2003) provide a useful term 'empathetic neutrality' to describe how researchers cannot be value free from social reality due to being embedded in the social world they are investigating, and shaped by their own identity, biography, history and experiences. Finding the truth of social reality is a continuous process, depending on the respondent's perceptions, and the approach the researcher takes, which is just one interpretation of a situation. To build a reliable and robust account of the investigated phenomenon, I have aimed to be as transparent (see section 5.5. on reflexivity) as possible throughout the data collection and analytical process.

## **5.2. Case study approach**

Trying to understand the complexities and multi-layered nature of organisational change can be challenging, particularly whilst also considering the contextualised environment within which an organisation is embedded. To tackle these challenges I adopt a case study strategy, with the intention to collect detailed information on ASR TSOs in a real life context (Yin 1989). Unpacking the organisations into different components and layers provides insight into the process and dynamics of organisational change (Simons, 2009). The reason for adopting a case study strategy was to investigate the varying external pressures within the context, how these are influential on the organisations, whilst also illustrating the internal dynamics and events and how these are all interrelated.

A key feature of case study strategy is to gather multiple perspectives of the investigated phenomenon using a range of sources, with the intention to provide a 'holistic' account of the investigated phenomenon (Lewis, 2003). Case studies allow the opportunity not to view organisational change as being performed in a linear manner - nor should it be portrayed as such, but should be celebrated for its messiness, complexity and uncertainty. The research is a case study of organisational change in ASR TSOs that was undertaken through investigating individual cases of organisations. This naturally created boundaries around the focus of investigation, exploring the complexities and particularities within each case study, however external perspectives were also sought to find alternative, and even disconfirming, views.

The research was interested in demonstrating the impact of the wider environment and how this varies by context, therefore a collective case study was applied involving research in multiple sites (Stake, 2005). Three ASR TSOs were selected (see sampling section below) with the intention to highlight emerging themes and comparisons across the organisations that explained organisational behaviour. Differences were also acknowledged and explored with the aim to highlight influential factors in shaping organisational change. The research is an exploratory case study that aims to provide rich portraits of real life situations of the phenomenon, illustrating different organisational trajectories and unpacking the 'black box' of how and why organisational change may occur.

### **5.2.1. Sampling**

The research used a purposeful strategy, which meant organisations were selected due to certain characteristics (see the table below) that would provide insight on the investigated phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). For example, organisations were selected that shared similar characteristics, including: providing welfare support to ASRs, established before the recession, obtained charitable status, and not solely dependent on statutory funding. This promoted cross-case comparison. The three sites were located in different regions, South West, West Midlands, and London, and were selected to represent contrasting features in the history of the development of ASR organisations, and how the context is influential on shaping organisational response. Although 'on paper' the case studies showed similar characteristics, the fieldwork demonstrated that the

organisations had unique forms, shapes and approaches that proved challenging to drawing out comparisons.

*Table 5.3. Characteristics of each case study at the time of fieldwork*

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>South West</b>	<b>West Midlands</b>	<b>London</b>
<b>Age</b>	16 years	16 years	30 years
<b>Target client group</b>	Asylum seekers, refugees, and unaccompanied minors	Asylum seekers, refugees and migrants	Asylum seekers, refugees and undocumented migrants
<b>Annual income</b>	£200,000	£450,000	£1.2 million
<b>Geographical scope</b>	Local	Local	Local
<b>Legal status</b>	Registered charity	Registered charity	Registered charity
<b>Workforce (approximately)</b>	8 Staff 10 Volunteers	15 Staff 80 Volunteers	25 Staff 30 Volunteers
<b>Why they established?</b>	Dispersal area	Dispersal area	Rising need to support migrant groups

The second stage of sampling was within each organisation. Participants within the organisation were selected from the different layers of the staffing structure to provide varying perspectives on organisational change. The participants were employed by the organisation for seven years or more to demonstrate their experiences since the recession. External stakeholders were included to understand the broader context and any contrasting views. These were approached through key gatekeepers in the organisation, desk research on local forums and steering groups, by spending time in the

organisation and developing knowledge on key individuals to interview. Participants included both:

- **Internal stakeholders:** volunteers, staff, trustees, Director
- **External stakeholders:** local authority, refugee agencies, faith groups, relevant services, funders

A sample of 15 participants was interviewed for each case study, which was sufficient in accessing a wide range of perspectives and would reach saturation in the information collected.

The third stage of sampling was based on timing. Three months of fieldwork was undertaken within each site sequentially, to allow sufficient time to collect the data and following the principles of my epistemological perspective of spending time in the field. Rigorous planning of each stage of the case study strategy was required before conducting the research, in order to maximise gathering data whilst minimising potential risk to the participants involved. Nevertheless, it is important to view the research design as a process that is likely to change within the setting and which will adapt along the journey (Lewis, 2003; Mason, 2002). Therefore I took an active role in assessing the process and progress of the research, having to make appropriate adjustments along the way. As the table below demonstrates the case studies have been labelled by their location, for a more detailed description of the case studies refer to Appendix One.

Table 5.4. Description of each case study

Case study	Description
<b>West Midlands</b>	a former refugee-led initiative that has become a medium-sized organisation, provides advocacy and advice services to ASRs, with an increasing focus on Eastern European migrants
<b>South West</b>	a medium-sized community organisation that was established from strong ties with the local authority and faith networks, provides advice, advocacy and in-house counselling, mainly to ASRs
<b>London</b>	a long-standing medium/ large-sized organisation established to tackle social injustice, now a multifunctioning space to address issues of migration through different policy fields, with increasing focus on tackling destitution. Provides advice as its core service, alongside, housing, probation, community projects, interpreting, and recently set up a trading arm

## 5.2.2. Gaining access

Once three organisations were selected, initial email invitations were sent to the Directors of each organisation. This briefly outlined the details of the research project and what it would entail for the organisation to participate, attached was an information sheet and fieldwork brief (see Appendix Two). A meeting was then arranged for the Director and other staff members (who usually became the gatekeeper in the organisation), to provide more detailed information about the project and, most importantly, for them to meet me as a researcher to understand my approach towards the research. I aimed to be transparent and develop a good rapport with the gatekeepers, which was key at this stage to gain the organisation's consent and dictated the level of access given within the organisation.

The first site visit was an important opportunity to spend a day at the organisation before commencing the fieldwork. It allowed me to get a 'feel' for the organisation, the routine of

the day, organise any practicalities (location, desk space), but more importantly allowed the opportunity to introduce myself individually to the workforce, to explain the research in more depth and answer any further questions. It was a chance to explain confidentiality and consent, for, although the organisation had agreed to be part of the study, I wanted to ensure all participants had given informed consent (Simons, 2009). I also found it useful to explain the value of conducting research and to encourage individuals to think about participating as an interviewee later on in the process.

### **Challenges in the field**

After organising the research there were some complications with access. A new Director was appointed in the selected South West case study and decided to pull out from being part of the research. Unlike the previous Director, the new Director was not willing to meet to discuss the project, giving me little opportunity to answer any concerns or build rapport. It emerged that the organisation was facing drastic funding cutbacks from the local authority on which the organisation was heavily dependent. The Director raised concern about the impact on workforce capacity and how the organisation could be portrayed within the research. Even though this site would have made an interesting example of how the context and current challenges are affecting TSOs, the organisation at this point would have given restricted access, impacting on the depth of the research. Fortunately, this happened fairly early in the research process and the site was the last one in the fieldwork sequence, which meant I had sufficient time to find a replacement case study within the same region. However, it did mean that the replacement

organisation was smaller than the others, hence the data was not as comparable. Nevertheless, this provided interesting information on different organisational shapes, size and forms, and if I had not been successful in finding a replacement at short notice this could have been detrimental to the overall research project.

### **5.2.3. Ethnographic approach**

The case study design was influenced by principles from an ethnographic approach. Time constraints prevented a full ethnographic study. However, there are key principles from the ethnography tradition that have been inspirational in the approach used here. Ethnographic researchers, such as Blommaert (2006; 2007), recognise that social phenomena are chaotic and messy, and rather than trying to simplify the complexities of what constitutes a phenomenon, they should be acknowledged for these uncertainties. Ethnographers tend to follow a similar epistemological approach as outlined in the first section that recognises society is formed of social constructions. Therefore research should be undertaken in natural everyday settings (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Ethnography does not aim to test theory but uses an inductive approach to allow the analysis to be data driven and transparent through a process of reflexivity. As Blommaert describes ‘the whole process of gathering and moulding knowledge is part of that knowledge; knowledge construction *is* knowledge, *the process is the product*’ (2006: 12).

In contemporary research, ethnography is used in familiar organisational settings to get a deeper understanding of organisation change and behaviour. Commentators argue that



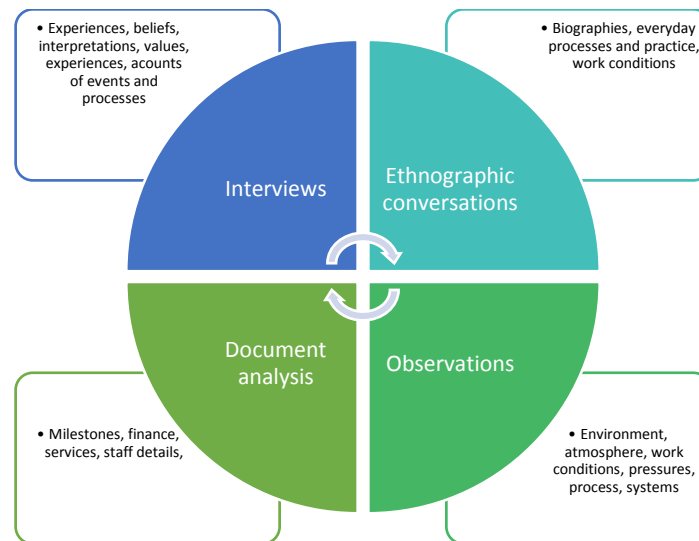
the only way of understanding this is by being there, and observing the day-to-day practices (Blackledge and Creese, 2010) to get a full picture of the phenomenon, and how this is embedded within the context. The traditional ethnographic approach explores both the macro and the micro elements of a phenomenon, which is comparable to the approach taken in this research by giving relevance to the different levels and systems within an organisation, whilst acknowledging the wider context. In particular, organisational ethnography zooms in on the work practices (Nicolini, 2009), where they are situated within the organisation, how they are understood and interpreted, and the differing dynamics and relationships involved. Following an ethnographic tradition this research promotes gathering multiple perspectives, from internal and external stakeholders, to provide an all-round picture of the phenomenon (Heller, 2008). The ethnographic principles applied are described in the next sections: gathering a range of sources using mixed methods (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995), collecting rich and detailed descriptions of the mundane practices and setting (section 5.3.2), undertaking a process of triangulation (section 5.4), and reflexivity throughout the research stages (section 5.5).

### **5.3. Methods**

A range of methods was used to collect the data, each method selected for gathering data that would answer a particular secondary question. The primary question would be answered by corroborating the various data to provide an all-round picture of the phenomenon. The diagram below demonstrates the different methods used and types of information collected, illustrating that the methods were not conducted in a linear process.

The methods were applied at the same time, overlapping and informing one another, demonstrating again the nature of research being a fluid and continuous process.

Figure 3 Research methods and data collected



### 5.3.1. Interviews

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with a total sample of 45 participants (15 participants from each case study). Interviews provide the opportunity to understand the interviewees' views, beliefs, experiences, interpretations (Mason, 2002) of events and what processes had influenced organisational change. For example, I did not assume how the environment influenced organisational change, but let the interviewees' highlight their key experiences and how they felt about it. However, these experiences are taken from one account of the phenomenon and are deeply rooted in the individual's identity that informs this perception. Interviews were conducted with both

internal and external stakeholders to identify and triangulate insider and outsider perspectives, to illustrate varying experiences of organisational change.

The interviews were conducted mid-way to the end of the fieldwork in each case study to ensure the relevant stakeholders were interviewed, to first build rapport with the participants, and develop a good understanding of the organisation to inform the topic guide. Some general themes informed the topic guides, such as, descriptive questions (i.e. job role), organisational change over the last ten years, strategies and rationale, external environment. As some interviews looked back retrospectively on organisational change, key milestones were used from the document analysis to clarify when, how and why certain changes happened. However, each topic guide differed slightly by the interviewee's position (i.e. finance, front line staff) or whether they had a different relationship with the case study (i.e. local authority).

### **Challenges in the field**

On the whole I felt I had used active listening and developed positive rapport with the interviewees, who felt comfortable to disclose the developments and achievements of the organisation, but also what challenges and tensions have arisen over the years. However, I felt two interviews that were conducted were not as successful. One with the London case study Chair who had previously been a politician, and clearly 'skirted around' the subjects rather than providing any direct answers. The other was with the West Midlands Director who was cautious about having a researcher in the

organisation, and how I might possibly portray the organisation. Although these interviews were not as informative they still provided valuable insight into the governance and leadership of both organisations, which was illustrated by the interviewees' response to the interview setting.

Following the interviews I would back up the recordings on a password secure laptop, and write up notes as soon as possible, reflecting on the interview process, notes taken during the interview, and any early 'hunches'. These reflections have provided essential information to refer back to when analysing the interviews to understand how I felt the interview went, what was significant, or any emerging issues i.e. language barriers. By locating the transcript within the context of the interview, it prevented me from overemphasising any issues later on in the analytical process. The interviews were transcribed promptly (with a month between each case study to catch up on any backlog), which helped to keep the information fresh in my mind and within context. Analytical memos were noted on any 'hunches' that were emerging from the data that was later referred to during the analytical stage of the process (Richards, 2009), and highlighting further participants to contact or raising further questions.

### **5.3.2. Ethnographic observations, conversations, fieldnotes and vignettes**

Although interviews can be a valuable source of information, some commentators criticise them for only providing an individual's account on their experiences and what they say they do. Interviews do not always reflect individuals' social actions and practices, as

Atkinson et al. (2003) argue 'we cannot rely on [the interview] for the information about what people do, or what they have done, rather only as a mechanism for eliciting what people say they do' (p.105). Therefore, applying the method of observation is beneficial to collect additional data 'to investigate, experience and represent the social life and social processes that occur in that setting' (Emerson et al., 2010), with the intention to corroborate gathered data to promote validity.

This method was selected to spend time within each organisation, zooming in on the internal processes and dynamics of an organisation, and observing the mundane practices. Three working days were spent at the organisation each week, whilst the other two were used to keep up-to-date with transcribing and writing up fieldnotes. There was an element of flexibility on which days to attend the organisation, depending on meetings, events, forums etc. Each organisation provided a desk space within the work setting that was negotiated with the gatekeeper, which allowed me to undertake desk research whilst observing the daily practices. These observations provided data on the work conditions, environment, routines, practices, and also the challenges, tensions, and pressures that arose on a daily basis. Other forms of observations included:

- Staff and trustee meetings
- Development days, AGMs
- In-house training on immigration issues
- Coffee breaks, lunch times
- Facilitating workshops and research focus groups

- External forums and meetings

Three months within each organisation was a key element of this research design, not only building rapport with participants, but also giving the opportunity to take an initial wide focus when collecting the data. Although I was unable to observe everything at the same time, the intention was to give equal attention to observing the daily activities from my perspective and give 'an adequate description of the phenomena of interest, in the circumstances in which they occur where they do, when they do' (Heller, 2008: 255). Over time I began to focus the research - as Erickson describes: 'over time observation and reflection enable the observer to develop an interpretive model of the organisation and the events observed' (1990: 144). By undergoing this process it allows the complexities of an organisation to become disentangled from the multitude of system layers (ibid).

Using an ethnographic rationale of unpacking the micro context and observing a variety of activities, events, practices, allowed me to capture the different layers, dynamics and processes within the case study. I was able to observe the internal structures and whether formalities, such as, meetings, supervisions, were regularly implemented. However, I do not perceive organisational change to happen in a vacuum and attending external activities was informative in placing organisational change within a wider context (i.e. local financial environment, collaborations etc.). Access to activities and events was dependent on the gatekeepers, but also the perspective of the Director.

After methodological and ethical consideration I decided not to fully participate in the organisations - providing advice to service users - due to not having appropriate training or experience. Service users were not the focal point, and I wanted to remain as flexible as possible to gather a wide perspective of the phenomenon. However, I immersed myself in the setting in other ways, such as, following the daily routine of the organisation i.e. timings of the day, attending meetings. I also actively participated in events, such as training, and on occasions helped facilitate workshops to give time back to the participants. I found that shared coffee breaks and lunch times were an essential form of data collection. These were valuable opportunities to talk with the participants more informally and openly about a wide range of topics, from day-to-day pressures to wider political issues (especially as the 2015 general election was approaching). As the fieldwork progressed, I grew in confidence and built more trust with the participants, and these conversations shed light on the individuals' biographies, beliefs, values and cultural issues, whilst also illustrating in-depth the relationships within the organisations.

The focus was to observe the detail of mundane practices and routine, jotting down notes throughout the day, which were then written up into fieldnotes to generate a source of data. This was typically done at the end of each day to ensure limited information was lost by the passage of time (Hammersely and Atkinson, 1995). This process involved free writing, letting the 'flowing rush' of memories of the day be noted down, whilst at the same time trying to form detailed accounts of people, scenes, events and dialogues (Emerson et al., 2010). The point of this was it 'turns it from a passing event, which exists only in its own moment of occurrence, into an account, which existing in its inscription and can be

reconsulted' (ibid: 353). Ensuring the fieldnotes were written meticulously and with rich descriptions of the settings or events meant this data was referred to later on and analysed. However, not everything can be observed, and there is a process of selection in writing fieldnotes even when trying to take a wide approach to observing as much as possible, and over time I found my notes were becoming more focused on certain areas of interest (Hammersely and Atkinson, 1995). To remain transparent and provide a credible account of the phenomenon, 'in-process memos' (Emerson et al., 1995) were recorded alongside fieldnotes. These memos are recorded in a separate place on analytical issues, such as, thoughts, feelings, hunches, and emerging themes, and any methodological issues that have come up during the process. I found the key challenge with this method was keeping the momentum of writing up fieldnotes, particularly on recording the mundane activities, and the amount of data this produced to be analysed later on in the process.

This data focused on providing rich descriptions of events, situations, and the wider setting and conditions within which these occurred. The fieldnotes have been used to produce vignettes in the empirical findings chapters, in order to bring to life a point in time that is illustrative of internal dynamics and processes, and produce a more in-depth and bottom up approach to understanding organisational change. My aim was to preserve as much as possible of the original fieldnotes, to keep the flavour, feelings and atmosphere (Emerson et al., 2010) with limited analysis, whilst portraying the social actions, practices and processes within the setting. However, some editing was needed to add more detail



and context, and on occasion interview extracts were included to illuminate the participants' voices to demonstrate their sense-making of the situation.

### 5.3.3. Document research

The third method used was document analysis on a range of materials that were produced by the organisations. This method was beneficial in collecting data over the last ten years to track organisational change, identifying key milestones and the associated contextual environment (May, 2001). The practicalities of accessing these documents were negotiated with the gatekeepers in the organisations. The table demonstrates the documents used, the data collected and the practicalities of accessing the data:

*Table 5.5. Document sources and data collected*

Document source	Data collected	Accessing document
<b>Annual report</b>	Mission, values, objectives Figures on service users Service provision outline Context, challenges Portray external appearance	Charity commission, website, gatekeeper, hard copies
<b>Financial statement</b>	Changes in funding streams and overall income Staff figures, premises	Charity Commission
<b>Business plan</b>	Financial forecast Strategic development	Gatekeeper, electronic copies
<b>Research reports, evaluations</b>	Funders Social issues, local demographics Service provision Portray external appearance	Gatekeeper, hard and electronic copies

When analysing these documents it was evident that they were authentic and meaningful (Scott, 1990), due to the documents being verified by the Charity Commission, and the documents needing to be coherent for a range of stakeholders (Bryman, 2008). Typically this task was given to the staff member that had the most proficient writing skills, often with a professional or academic background. However, the analysis also highlighted that the information portrayed in the documents was not necessarily credible or representative (Scott, 1990) of how the organisations were actually operating. For example, the annual report and business plan were used as tools to demonstrate a positive external appearance of how the organisation operates, celebrating the successful aspects and achievements over the year, with the intention of impressing external stakeholders and future funders. These documents provide limited insight into the day-to-day running of the organisation, workforce practice, or any tensions, issues or challenges that may arise. For example, I found it difficult to gain a true reflection of the delivery of services, as some services had ended due to funding cuts but were documented as still running.

The annual accounts were a useful resource to outline the different financial sources and the changes in overall revenue. This provided a record of how the organisation had grown and some insight into how changes in funding had shaped the organisation. Initially, I intended to draw out changes in funding strategies and make comparisons of how funding shaped the organisations' service provision. However, from analysis of financial statements and discussions with the employees responsible for the accounts, I found that each organisation recorded financial resources differently (Morgan, 2011), making this source of data unreliable to draw out themes or themes across the organisations. For

example, one organisation stated all their funding was unrestricted although this was not the case, whilst another did not transparently illustrate their earned income from a contract agreement. An unexpected resource were research reports and evaluations that were conducted by the organisations. For example, the London case study had been commissioned by the local authority to undertake several research projects of the local area, which provided key figures on demographics and how services are targeted at identified social problems.

I acknowledged that documents 'are constructed in particular contexts, by particular people, with particular purposes, and with consequences - intended and unintended' (Mason, 2005: 110), therefore an interpretivist approach was used to analyse the documents. This meant not always viewing the content as the most important feature (Prior, 2003) or viewing the documents as neutral artefacts (May, 2001), but trying to understand the meanings and how these were constructed and portrayed in the documents. In particular, documents are produced in socio-political and economic environments that influence what the organisation decided to put in or leave out (May, 2001). For example, some of organisations refrained from writing press releases due to the politicised nature of ASR, and produced the documents to be informative rather than political. Also, other documents, such as business plans, are useful in understanding the strategic direction and ideas fuelling organisational development, although not all of these actions would have been fulfilled. This is why corroborating this data with fieldnotes on everyday practices, and perceptions of experiences from the interviews, fills the gaps in knowledge and creates validity of the account portrayed in the findings.

#### 5.3.4. Analytical process

Using different research methods whilst adopting an inductive approach, has meant a significant amount of data was gathered. It was rather daunting to start making sense of all the data. In particular, care was needed to sort out the data systematically and in a coherent manner without losing its richness (Irvine and Gaffikin, 2006). Firstly, the analytical process does not (and should not) start after all the data has been gathered. The table below demonstrates the different stages of the analytical process for this study:

*Table 5.6. Stages of the analytical process*

Stage	Process	Involves
<b>One</b>	Research questions and research design	Selecting and refining what data to collect
<b>Two</b>	Fieldwork	Reflections on fieldwork, interview summaries, field notes
<b>Three</b>	Transcribing	Annotations and various memos (research, methodology and analytical)
<b>Four</b>	First stage of coding	Open-coding process
<b>Five</b>	Second stage of coding	Axial-coding process
<b>Six</b>	Making sense of the data	Use of tables, diagrams and vignettes
<b>Seven</b>	Drawing on theories	Using multiple theories that explain various parts of the data
<b>Eight</b>	Writing up	What perspective to portray and selecting what is put in and left out of the report

Although the table above has portrayed a linear process, the different analytical stages were interwoven and there was a backwards and forwards motion between the different data to make sense of what was happening and the underlying meanings. The first few

analytical stages (one, two and three) have been described, this section will provide more information on the remaining stages. The analytical process adopted an inductive mode, which meant the study was not testing any theory and the emphasis was on the data. This does not mean the data speaks for itself but rather there is interplay between the data and myself, in which the data is read literally, interpretively and reflexively (Mason, 2002: 148). The first part of coding, using NVivo 9 software, was a process of open-coding, by referring to reflections and analytical memos initial nodes and descriptions were developed, and all the interviews and field notes were coded line by line. Throughout the coding process, annotations, and various memos were used '*to get up off*' the data (Richards, 2009). These are important methods to start forming analytical ideas and themes, and highlight areas to make further enquiries.

The second part of the coding process and analysis (stage five) was undertaken using axial coding. This involves the nodes being revisited and refined to form a coding tree of categories and concepts, for example, the parent nodes cover work culture, relationships and funding environment. For a more detailed outline of the parent and child codes used refer to the code book in appendix three. Again annotations and memos were used throughout the process to make connections between the categories, which is 'done by utilizing a coding paradigm involving conditions, context, action/ interactional strategies and consequences' (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 96). This is a fundamental part of the process of sorting the data to focus individually on each concept and emerging theme (Ritchie et al., 2003), by case study and comparatively. This demonstrates the inductive process of breaking down the data into various segments, then systematically organising

the data into manageable codes, with the intention to delve into the categories to highlight patterns, themes, connections that explain the data (Simons, 2009).

What was clear from this process was that the data was messy, complex and uncertain, particularly as data overlaps with multiple categories. To make the data more manageable a combination of diagrams and tables were produced to capture visually any emerging themes or patterns to make sense of the data (Miles and Hubermans, 1994). Diagrams are beneficial in highlighting themes and mapping any inter-relationships and patterns, whereas tables identify any comparisons or differences across the case studies. Using a combination of modes, such as NVivo enquiries and vignettes, was fundamental in developing more substantive claims from the data. By continuously going backwards and forwards in the data to understand organisational change and the meanings behind this, different parts of the puzzle were drawn out to produce a holistic account of the phenomenon. Part of the process of moving from the data to understanding the case is through a formal process of cognitive analysis, but also involves 'the instinctive feelings or insights you have that certain issues are significant, the puzzles in the observations and data that do not fit emerging themes, the metaphors, images and other artistic ways in which you gain an intuitive grasp of what the data mean' (Simons, 2009: 126). By staying close to the data and reflexive throughout the process I have been aware of my role in interpreting the data.

Other ways of interpreting the data are applying theories (see Analytical Framework Chapter Four), and lastly throughout the writing up process, from writing as a mode of interpretation (ibid) and how the findings are represented in the final product i.e. what data was included or left out. The empirical findings chapters consist of a range of descriptive, interpretive and reflexive evidence, to engage the reader and be transparent on how the conclusions were formed (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003). It is salient to note that the findings illustrated in the empirical findings chapters are from the view point of the participants. From the inductive nature of the analytical process the findings portrayed emerged as being the most important factors to the participants. For example, in Chapter Six it illustrates the external pressures identified by the participants that had the most influential impact on organisational change, rather than outlining an exhaustive list of all the factors within the context.

#### **5.4. Reflexivity**

Walsh (1998) notes 'the observer is the primary research instrument, accessing the field relations, conducting and structuring observations and interviews, writing field notes, using audio and visual recordings, reading documents, recording and transcribing and finally writing up the research' (p.221). By viewing the researcher as an instrument, it places them as a central focal point and illustrates the relevance of understanding what the researcher brings with them that could influence this process. Maso (2003) claims 'researchers bring with them their own emotions, intuitions, experiences, meanings, values, commitments, presuppositions, prejudices and personal agendas' (p.40), and

addressing these issues of subjectivity can promote the trustworthiness and authenticity of the study.

I believe that my PhD research project did not operate in a vacuum but rather there were a number of factors from my own identity and context at the time that influenced how the research was undertaken and interpreted. Looking at the context, the topic of immigration was significantly heightened due to the impending 2015 general election, and the growing popularity of UKIP, known for its anti-immigration rhetoric. My previous experience working with ASRs in TSOs, placed me in an advantageous position by having knowledge of sector concerns, understanding of the asylum process, and being passionate about the field. However, it also meant at times I could be overly sympathetic to the cause and the services the organisations provided, which has been referred to by ethnographers as 'over-rapport' (Millers, 1952 in Atkinson et al., 2003). This means a researcher 'may be accused of losing their capacity to explore a multiplicity of perspectives or to grasp a social world holistically if too closely aligned with just one, partial interpretation' (Atkinson et al., 2003: 31). Through the reflexive process of collecting the data, the analytical process, and in particular when portraying the findings, it was important not to be swayed to be over sympathetic to the organisations but to remain objective and critical.

Also, I found the reflexive process was important to me as an individual given the length of time in the field. Overall, the fieldwork took 11 months including relocating to two different cities during that time. Beginning at each site was like starting a new job, nerve-



racking and exciting at the same time, and having to find a balance of overtly undertaking a research position but also not wanting to be a complete outsider. Due to the length of time I built good rapport with some participants, and came to be recognised in some instances as part of the organisation, e.g. I was asked to join staff events. However, as in 'real life' I did not relate as well with everyone. Reflexivity gave me the opportunity to review my position as a researcher in the organisation, building an appropriate balance with participants, and to reinforce my understanding of how it was impacting on my personal life.

Thinking reflexively was essential to the study, to 'come clean' (Maso, 2003) about the subjectivity in the research and how this is just one interpretation of the phenomenon. It also provided valuable rich data on the setting, context and relationships, so to not take what participants said as truth, but to interpret their experiences and what they highlighted as relevant. Co-constructing the data and undertaking a rigorous process of reflexivity, reinforces my epistemological perspective that meanings and interpretations of the phenomenon are negotiated, and understood through shared social constructions. Furthermore, reflexivity promoted the space to be self-critical about the data collection, the methods used, the approach taken, and how this differed by case study. Doing this encouraged the research to be conducted in an ethical and considerate manner, and improved the quality of the research.

## **5.5. Ethical considerations**

Considering ethical matters should not only be undertaken before commencing the research project, but should be a continuous process throughout the study. Conducting research is like a journey, which requires the researcher to be flexible and to make adjustments. Therefore, it is imperative that the researcher continuously reflects on the process and whether there are any emerging ethical issues or concerns that need addressing i.e. particularly as spending considerable time based at each organisation, there was potential for new issues to arise.

As an ESRC funded doctoral researcher I referred to the ESRC Research Ethics Framework (ESRC, 2012; 2015), to give me guidance on how to conduct the research transparently and without deception. This was given considerable attention during the University of Birmingham's ethical review, which was successfully completed. The process provided the opportunity to reflect in-depth on every case scenario, how to overcome any problems, and rigorously plan the process step-by-step i.e. from collecting the data, to how it would be securely stored. By going through the ethical review process and receiving continuous supervision from two experienced academics, this provided essential guidance on how to initiate and undertake the research to the highest ethical standards.

There were three significant ethical considerations in my study. Firstly, as a researcher I aim to be as transparent as possible with the participants about the purpose of the

research (Simons, 2009; ESRC, 2015). As I was conducting overt research I gave the participants as much information as possible about the aims and objectives of the research through meetings and written documents. However, by using an inductive mode to undertake the research, I was not fully aware of what findings would emerge until found. To ensure the participants were not misled in any way, I regularly liaised with the gatekeepers throughout the research to discuss what was coming up in the research and to confirm they were happy to continue, which I found developed a strong rapport and openness.

Secondly, I was keen to ensure all participants were involved voluntarily and had not felt coerced in any way (ESRC, 2015). The gaining access section highlights there was a thorough process to establish strong relationships and to negotiate the details of the fieldwork. This allowed participants to raise any concerns, so they had a comprehensive and accessible account of the research to make an appropriate decision on whether they would like to participate. As the ESRC claims 'informed consent entails giving sufficient information about the research and ensuring that there is no explicit or implicit coercion...So that prospective participants can make an informed and free decision on their possible involvement' (2015: 29). However, this does not mean having to disclose all the details of the research (Lewis, 2003), but on the main factors that will minimize any potential risk to the participant, particularly understanding on how and for what the data will be used. Consent forms were required to be signed by those with senior roles in the organisations, and by those who took part in interviews. After consideration I have not used pseudonyms for the organisations, as it was thought more informative to use the

regional locations within which the case studies were embedded, for which the organisations gave consent.

Thirdly, a fundamental part of gaining informed consent involves providing sufficient information on how anonymity will be adhered to during the study. This refers to participants having the space to discuss issues without the researcher disclosing any information on the individuals' identity. A number of participants claimed they did not mind if their identity was revealed, but in their interests and for consistency I decided not to disclose any information and changed minor details to disguise their identities i.e. gender, ethnicity. Informing participants about following a guideline of anonymity creates an environment in which they feel relaxed and comfortable to talk openly and honestly. However, this could also result in participants discussing something they might not want me to use (Simons, 2009), therefore I gave the opportunity to withdraw any information they did not want to be used.

## **5.6. Summary**

It is arguable whether a study can be fully replicated due to the complexity of the phenomenon and being embedded within a particular social context (Lewis and Richie, 2003). Also, research is flexible in nature and may have to be assessed along the journey. However, this chapter has provided a detailed outline of the research design and procedure undertaken, to allow other researchers to follow similar steps. This is important for demonstrating the 'trustworthiness' and 'consistency' of the study (Lewis and Ritchie,

2003). The methods selected to answer certain aspects of the research questions demonstrates the authenticity of the research. The extensive and critical analytical process on grounded data has subsequently portrayed 'accuracy in reflecting the situation, relevance, timelines and utility' (Simons, 2009: 128).

To ensure I did not over claim from the data a process of self-testing was beneficial in promoting the validity of the findings. This was done through several modes, such as, triangulation, discussing emerging themes with peers and supervisors, and continuously being self-critical of myself and interpretations of the data. Triangulation was undertaken in three ways, firstly, by using a range of methods to gather data on various perspectives to produce an all-round picture of the phenomenon. Secondly, through 'cross-checking the relevance and significance of issues or testing arguments and perspectives from different angles to generate and strengthen evidence in support of key claims' (ibid: 129). This process prevented me from conveniently drawing on data that supports my arguments, but by cross-checking assumptions produced more substantive claims. During this process it was important also to be conscious of identifying any outliers that illuminate other perspectives. Thirdly, by looking at the data by a multi-layered analytical framework it has been explored from different theoretical perspectives adding to the robustness of the study.

## CHAPTER SIX. PRESSURES FROM THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

### 6. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the empirical findings at the macro-level, the various exogenous pressures that influence and shape organisational change of the investigated case studies. It will focus on answering the research question, *'How are internal organisational developments being influenced by the wider systems of the contextual environment the organisations are operating within?'* drawn out from section 3.1. discussing the concept 'context'. During the fieldwork it was evident that the external environment was 'messy', 'complex', and often the different elements of the context were interrelated or embedded within one another. By unpacking the different exogenous pressures the chapter aims to highlight these pressures, where the case studies are situated, and how these were interpreted and experienced by the actors.

To produce an insightful account of how the range of exogenous pressures has shaped the case studies, principles from the analytical framework will be drawn upon. Principles of institutional theory and the concept of institutional isomorphism (see Chapter Four) will be applied to provide an initial explanation of organisational change. Primarily, the concept of coercive isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991) will be used to illustrate organisations adopting similar systems and processes from the dominant culture, which become normative within the organisation's work culture even though it may not promote organisational efficiency. The definition used for coercive isomorphism is *'the sense of*

*pressures for conformity exerted on organisations stemming from government mandate and existing in a common legal environment'* (Thornton et al., 2012: 37). This chapter will demonstrate how the case studies have adopted similar formal structural elements, however these theoretical concepts only explain organisational change to a point as there is evident diversification across the case studies' trajectories. It will demonstrate that the theory lacks attention to the role of the actors, the field, and the specific context unique to the case studies.

Briefly, the chapter has been divided into three broad sections. Firstly, it will look at how negative rhetoric towards migration (public, media and political) can have a knock-on effect on organisations. Secondly, this section will begin to explore the research question *'How have organisations' funding strategies changed and how has this shaped the service delivery of organisations?'* by looking at the shifting funding environment, the latter part of the question will be answered in the following chapter. Thirdly, experiences from the case studies will be drawn out on the changing sectoral relationship with the government. There will be some discussion of the influence these pressures have on organisational behaviour, however the focus will be at field-level with some indications as to how they influence the organisation at an internal level. This chapter sets out the context in which the case studies have been operating, and the following Chapters Seven and Eight will concentrate on unpacking organisational change, firstly, at an organisational-level, and then secondly, at the individual actors.

## **6.5. Negative socio-political attitudes**

This section follows on from Chapter One and Two by drawing out the empirical evidence illustrating the case studies' everyday experiences and interpretations of negative socio and political attitudes within the organisational setting.

### **6.1.1. Hostile attitudes from the wider environment**

When discussing with respondents negative public perceptions, the topic of the media and how migrants were negatively portrayed were often interrelated. The respondents felt that certain tabloid newspapers fuelled negative stereotypes of migrants, and heightened demonising perceptions on certain areas of migration i.e. asylum seekers, and the effect of media using incorrect terminology - such as, illegal immigrants:-

*'It is toxic... I think that drive from predominantly tabloid press in the early 2000s that's still with us. Even if we don't use the same phrases the xenophobic reaction is still very much there, and the general public cannot distinguish between different groups of migrants. They just cannot, and partly that is led by the tabloid press that view every migrant as the same.'* (Director, London refugee organisation)

Some respondents described how media discourse had become increasingly offensive over the years, and now included Eastern European migrants, repeating terms such as 'bogus asylum seekers' and 'benefit scroungers', which were being commonly used in the media. This raised fears of not only misinforming the public but also demonizing these



individuals to be further marginalised from the host country. By negative terminology being used in the media, and at times ASRs being associated with terrorism (Gale, 2004), this has created conditions fuelling prejudice and making it acceptable to voice racist views:-

*‘... it feels like it is getting worse. It is more and more acceptable to say things, the language gets more offensive all the time, ‘bogus asylum seekers’ and all that stuff. I think it is more hostile and you can feel Labour completely giving in, really, in any attempt to challenge that. But I think they gave up on that a long time ago’* (Director, London refugee agency)

The South West and West Midlands case studies have always been wary of actively campaigning and lobbying, by wanting to keep a low public profile, lacking in capacity, and justified this as the function of large national refugee organisations thought to have more of an influential impact. The London case study had more of an active role in campaigning and lobbying, but this was also evidently showing signs of decline. In contrast to Crouch (2011) who argues that TSOs’ role in campaigning and advocacy is compromised by pressure from having government funding, this research found that a decrease in resources and overstretched capacity led organisations putting these on the ‘back burner’, with respondents also claiming that with the current government lobbying would ‘fall on deaf ears’. With the ending of the Labour administration there was perceived to have been an increase in political hostility towards migration and loss of a sympathetic ear, and this coercive pressure was making the case studies increasingly wary of where to position themselves in the operating environment.

### **'Election day'**

When I arrived in the morning the staff and service users were outside the office, waiting for the front door to be opened to start the day. As we stood at the top of the stairs the conversation was dominated by the local elections that were taking place that day. Mainly the staff were sharing their concerns that UKIP would be successful in winning seats and the detrimental repercussions this would have, not only for the organisation, but also for them as non-British citizens. It was a dark damp morning, which was reflected in peoples' tired despondent faces. This feeling of dread and nervous anticipation remained throughout the day, and could not be shaken off.

*'...you can imagine if UKIP were going to target that vote, and they got wind of how many people from the EU we help to find work and help them with their housing problems and this that and the other. They are all things that they are banging on about, so you know we could end up being victimized as an organisation and the members of staff being harassed because of the work that we do'. (Adviser)*

*Case study: West Midlands*

*Source: Author's fieldnotes and interviews*

The fieldwork was undertaken during 2015, an election year, and as the election drew closer concerns were heightened due to issues around migration being a topical subject underpinning conversations by politicians, the public, and media. The above vignette describes one of many observations (others during lunch-time and breaks), when conversation was focused on debating the up-coming elections, particularly the different political parties' views on immigration. Across the case studies there was an

understanding that the outcome of the elections would have an effect on the organisation, either on how the newly elected government would target public expenditure cutbacks or implement changes in policy. A major concern was UKIP, well-known for its anti-migration and nationalistic discourse, apparently growing in public support and occupying a strong position in media coverage. UKIP was seen as a direct threat to the case studies by conflicting with their core missions and values, and the respondents believed this was fuelling racist beliefs within society and creating a hostile environment for migrants. As the vignette demonstrates there was also concern about UKIP gaining power due to the make-up of the workforce mainly consisting of a spectrum of migrants, and directly understanding feelings of being marginalised within society.

### **6.1.2 Keeping a low public profile**

Negative socio-political attitudes can influence organisations in various ways and actors need to consider them when strategically deciding how to navigate and position themselves in the environment. This section aims to illustrate how this is not only at a macro-level, but affects the challenges the organisations face during mundane everyday activities, and consequently, how the organisations have felt the need to respond.

#### **‘The boiler man’**

Today is a Friday - typically this would be a drop-in day for the advice services and bustling with other activities. Instead, the front door is locked. I am buzzed in, and as I

walk up the stairs to the reception area I am hit by a wall of frantic commotion. Two employees are desperately trying to mop up water that has escaped from a burst boiler overnight.

The water is turned off at the mains, and a local plumber is called out to fix the boiler. Although the reception area is out of action, the English classes are still being held in another room in an attempt to salvage something of the day. Service users were accessing the building, attending the classes, and meeting with staff - with the general feeling being that of a comfortable and welcoming environment. The local plumber who had been fixing the boiler all day clearly felt uneasy about this situation, and disclosed to the Director his negative prejudices about *'all these immigrants wandering around'* the building. To which the Director responded rhetorically *'Do you know what this organisation is established for?!'*

Once the boiler was fixed, plumber gone, and the classes finished, the staff sat together drinking tea and reflected on the unusual day. When the topic of the plumber was raised and him openly expressing prejudiced views within their workplace, this stirred a lot of reaction from the employees on other examples when the general public wanted to *'chip in their views'* on migration. The employees described numerous situations, from dating to having a beauty treatment, being asked their occupation and when stating they worked with asylum seekers were often met with a negative reaction.

*Case study: South West*

*Source: Author's fieldnotes*

This vignette demonstrates how on a day-to-day basis, mundane activities or individuals can be subjected to prejudice and racist views not only in a work capacity but also impacting on staff personal lives. Although the respondents felt proud to be supporting this social purpose and often found they were advocating outside of the workplace, they were aware that there were times when it was not appropriate to declare their occupation.

Compared to other fields, such as, perhaps homelessness or disability, these case studies were cautious about the public appearance of the organisation and whether to advertise externally. The pros and cons were negotiated around externally advertising services on the outside of the premises - whether this was a beneficial means of marketing in the local community balanced with concern this could provoke racial attacks. As a consequence of the latter, the West Midlands case study had refrained from advertising outside the premises to prevent negative attention being attracted to the organisation, service users, and the multi-cultural workforce. This did not appear to affect the increasing numbers accessing the services due to it being well-known within that community.

*'We have always had a little worry about the backlash of [being] an organisation that supports immigrants and asylum seekers, so in that respect we have kept a fairly low profile...we don't have a massive sign outside the door saying who we are..., but fortunately through our history we have not had the English Defence League standing outside the doors with placards saying to go home or anything of that sort. But we have*

*always thought to be a bit cautious about making ourselves public so we don't do press releases. But we have a newsletter which is available and a website, so we are not hiding but we are not going out of our way to make ourselves known to the public.'* (Chair, West Midlands case study)

This case study had removed the term asylum seekers from the organisation's name. There are conflicting views within the organisation on the rationale for this. Some state the change was due to the term being stigmatised and not wanting to act as a deterrent to some funders or other stakeholders. Others claim it was a response to widening the remit to include Eastern European migrants, and therefore replaced asylum seekers in the name. Either way, by changing the organisation's name demonstrates how the actors are consciously adapting to shifting policies and attitudes, and the importance of the organisation's external appearance.

The South West case study had a process of negotiation between the trustees and senior management on whether to advertise outside the premises:-

*'... when I first started, for instance, there was nothing that said [name] on the front door. We got a letter box with a fire extinguisher in the letter box because [former Director] was convinced we were going to be fire bombed. I came to the conclusion, and it took me several goes with the trustees...before I could put [name] on the front of the building... If a far right organisation wants to find out where we are...it is not rocket science for them.'*

*But we also want to tell the clients where we are. We are not ashamed of it, but that's been an interesting journey.'* (Director, South West case study)

The case studies spoke positively about their respective local areas due to having a long history of migration and established ethnic minority communities. Nonetheless, the actors had heightened concerns due to the negative stigma attached and in response all three case studies had a formal system checking individuals when they entered the building. One case study even had a CCTV camera at the main entrance, to reduce any potential risk but also to identify police. The relationship with the local police was an interesting example, in all three case studies, of the actors having to negotiate with certain power dynamics within the external environment. The case studies were wary about the police entering the building without warning due to many of the clients not having the right legal status or immigration papers and being at risk of deportation. However, there seemed to be a mutual recognition that the police would not enter the building without some notice so as not to risk the reputation of the organisation.

### **6.1.3. Politicised and 'undeserving' funding group**

There was a consensus across the respondents that accessing funding for ASRs was comparatively more challenging than other policy fields. As the West Midlands Chair describes *'we are not the cats home, we are not fluffy or cuddly so we are not a charity that people will immediately think – oh, that's a charity we want to support'*. It was believed that the challenge in accessing funding was a result of negative connotations and the

politicised nature of migration, illustrating how the different elements within the external environment are interrelated within one another.

The respondents claimed this negative attitude was largely dependent on the funding body, for example, public funds and fundraising were seen by the respondents as particularly difficult to access.

*'...if we went to the town centre saying we are supporting immigrants and asylum seekers what do you think will happen? I think we would get chased away. I think people are generally quite tolerant but they would not support that as a charity I don't think'. (Chair, West Midlands case study)*

For other TSOs individual giving is a substantial contributor to income, and individuals are still the sector's main source providing 46% of the total income (Crees et al., 2016). For the West Midlands and London case studies individual giving is not really a strong or viable source of income due to the attached negative socio-political attitudes. By keeping a relatively low public profile due to negative socio-political attitudes this places them at a disadvantage, not having successful brand power. Negative demonising labels and being viewed as 'undeserving' of tax-payers' money or for the focus of charitable giving has acted as a barrier for these case studies in accessing traditional means of donations and fundraising, but instead the organisations have rechannelled their resources to target charitable trusts. However, it will be demonstrated further on how success varies, with the



South West case study being in a better position to access donations by being embedded within a network of faith communities.

The priorities of funding streams change over time. One example is the change in government administration, with Labour having been more sympathetic to spending public funds to support the needs of socially excluded groups, such as ASRs, than the Conservative-led Coalition. However, the respondents felt funders were swayed by what was the 'flavour of the month' or by wanting to support a 'sexy' cause. During the fieldwork migration had become a highly political and sensitive area, which the respondents feared had discouraged some funders from supporting the organisations, or at least until the current elections had passed. Although charitable trusts have been recognized as more sympathetic to targeting funding at marginalised social groups and humanitarian causes, there were concerns from some respondents that this funding process was not completely unbiased. One external respondent recounted a situation sitting in on a funding process and funders commenting *'why don't they go back to their own countries, if they come here they should integrate with us, why do they need something special'*. This raises concerns that the funding application process is not completely untouched by prejudice or there is a preference in the migrant spectrum i.e. Eastern European migrants or 'genuine refugees' are viewed as more 'deserving' than those with no recourse to public funds (NRPF). Respondents describe particular issues in accessing funding for the latter group due to misconceptions that it is illegal to provide support for those with NRPF.

*'...it is such a political area and they worry it is not legal for them..., it is a difficult area because should we be putting money into this area whereas everyone is saying they*

*should just go home. It is public opinion but it leads to this issue of legality because they hear illegal migrants, illegal immigrants and then their thinking if they fund that what we give goes into supporting illegal immigrants - is that OK?'. (Funder, London funding body)*

What is evident is that these negative attitudes have put the case studies under pressure to act strategically when applying for funding, be creative in rebranding (see section 7.1.3), and to ensure the different funding meet the overall group's needs. This makes it a more complex and challenging environment to operate within, and for the case studies to keep on top of:-

*'Statutory agencies are not likely to fund asylum seekers, charitable trusts are likely to see the point and be very understanding. So again horses for courses. So if you are struggling to get statutory agency to fund a very unpopular cause then that part of your service you try to resource it with people who are more sympathetic to these causes.'*  
(Director, West Midlands case study)

## **6.2. The multifaceted funding landscape**

The funding landscape for all three case studies is complex and multi-layered. It consists of different sources and types of funding that each come with their own issues, tensions and challenges. The table below demonstrates the different approaches to funding portfolios, creating different funding relationships, service delivery, and forming varying experiences of the funding environment. The discussion below will use empirical findings to highlight how other factors, such as, location, individuals, and values, are influential in

whether organisations conform to or resist funding pressures, illustrating variance in organisational behaviour.

*Table 6.7. Different types of income by case study*

<b>Finance revenue</b>	<b>West Midlands Case Study</b>	<b>South West Case Study</b>	<b>London Case Study</b>
Individual giving	Limited amount of individual giving received	A substantial amount of donations/ fundraising received through connections with local churches and the community	Limited amount of individual giving received
Statutory funding	Received some local authority funding for advice services, but struggled to develop a more substantial funding relationship. Central government contract to deliver assisted voluntary return	Initially had a start-up fund from the local authority. Have long-standing contract with Supporting People. Refrains from tendering for other public service contracts	At one point half of its revenue was public funds. This was a mixture of central and local authority, and showed the diversity in service streams. Including work programme, probation services, interpreting services
Voluntary sector	Mixture of different charitable trust funding	Mixture of different charitable trust funding	Mixture of different charitable trust funding
Big Lottery Fund	A substantial Reaching Communities grant which has recently been successfully reapplied for	Refrains from applying to BIG due to belief the funding is associated with gambling	A substantial Reaching Communities grant, which has recently been successfully reapplied for
Income generation (trading)	Limited amount of income generating by hiring a room	Limited amount of income generating by hiring a room	Various methods of income generating, such as, renting space, training sessions, selling interpretation services. Recently set up a social enterprise.

### **6.2.1. Wider contracting environment of the ASR sector**

How the ASR sector has been recognized as a public sector provider varies by organisational size, location and relationship. Chapter Three outlines the contract environment within the wider ASR sector, primarily initiated during Labour when two

national refugee agencies (Refugee Action and Refugee Council) dominated the delivery of national contracts from the Home Office. Refugee Action was the prime contractor to deliver a service (RIES) to promote integration and employment services for refugees, with all three case studies as sub-contractors. This service was meant to reduce pressures on public services in their localities, and was a key contracting experience for all three case studies (for the West Midlands it was their first taste) and a beneficial source of funding for employment services. As a consequence of public expenditure cutbacks the contract ended in 2011 (Refugee Action, 2011), and the case studies have not been successful in fully replacing this funding to the detriment of employment services.

*'A year has now passed since the Coalition government has come into office and we have experienced many changes in the immigration landscape. Most notably we lost immediate funding through the ending of the RIES funding and we are now very conscious of the effect of the huge cuts to the large refugee organisations such as Refugee Council and Refugee Action. Our closest Refugee Action office in [name] has taken a massive funding cut of 80%'. (Annual report 2011, South West case study)*

These cuts are mainly from two Home Office contracts that were retendered, one neither national organisation decided to bid for due to not fitting their objectives, and the other was lost by being undercut by the competitor TSO, Migrant Helpline. Over the years the case studies argued that these national refugee organisations were losing independence and autonomy, due to being heavily restricted by the contractual requirements. One respondent viewed Refugee Action as 'selling out' by a large amount of its funding being focused on assisted voluntary return (AVR) that fits in with the government priority to

maximize deportation of migrants (McGhee et al., 2016). The case studies decided not to tender for the Home Office contracts, partly due to lack of capacity, but also seeing the dramatic impact on the larger national organisations when they lost these contracts, and not wanting to damage their independence or credibility.

The retendered Home Office contracts were won by Migrant Helpline, a much smaller organisation that was able to undercut costs considerably, and as a result of taking on the contract rapidly expanded in organisational size. This new service provision was criticised for being '*set up to fail asylum seekers*' and because of a newly inserted anti-lobbying clause in the contract that prevented Migrant Helpline from using data collected to lobby government on policy. Previously, Refugee Action and Refugee Council had been in a more autonomous position to lobby with data collected. This demonstrates the impact of the wider anti-campaigning and anti-lobbying climate developed during the Coalition and Conservative administrations, exemplified by the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014 (Lobbying Act, 2014).

The respondents described this wider contract environment as incidentally creating a two tier refugee sector. The case studies were segregated from the wider contract environment, and also by no longer being subcontracted for RIES this meant the organisations were expected to fill gaps in service provision. Therefore, the case studies

looked for funding in other areas, with varied success in local authority funding, and developing a huge reliance on charitable trust funding subsidizing public services.

The combination of barriers to access the wider contract environment, and local authorities refraining from funding asylum seeker services, has meant there are limited contracting opportunities in the refugee sector for the case studies in comparison to other policy fields. For example, in policy fields such as housing, employment and probation there is more government incentive to fund these types of services, or it is a statutory duty to do so. To some extent this has been advantageous for the case studies by them not becoming dependent on government funding. Instead being 'sheltered' from this competitive contract environment in the refugee field has meant the case studies have held on to their independence.

### **6.2.2. Varied experiences of outsourcing public services**

All three case studies have increasingly had to deliver welfare services, such as advice services, due to increasing demand from service users and a failure in mainstream services to meet this demand (Cabinet Office, 2012, LBF, 2015). This section will explore the case studies approach towards entering the contract environment, for more detailed discussion on contractual arrangements with the local authority see section 6.4.1.

The West Midlands was actively driven to move away from dependency on grants to what they thought were more sustainable long-term contracts. However, the West Midlands experience of being commissioned by the local authority has been fairly limited, as the respondents claimed they *'did not get a look in'*, instead the core advice service was mainly funded by a range of charitable trusts. The case study was keen to find other potential contracting opportunities with statutory agencies, therefore during the fieldwork the organisation was working on a joint collaboration for a substantial, long-term public health contract, to act as the gatekeeper for hard to reach communities and to provide the specialised expertise.

The South West had a different contracting experience based on being a small subcontractor in larger contracts, much lower down in the supply chain. The respondents justified this position based on the organisation's small size and not feeling confident to enter into the tendering environment, claiming the organisation did not have the appropriate expertise, skills and capacity. Although the organisation could seek support to develop funding bids, and subsequently be able to expand if it applied for larger contracts, the leaders refrained from entering the competitive environment. Instead, the Director and Chair were focused on applying for modest amounts of funding to meet the organisation's basic requirements, due to fear that if the organisation started accessing large funding amounts the nature of the organisation would change for the worse. This resistance was justified by taking on a small subcontractor role - it relieved a lot of the pressure to meet the contract overheads, heavy reporting requirements, and not being subjected to the same risk factors. This provided the organisation with a 'sheltered'

environment to operate within, maintaining its position, but also meant it prevented the organisation from expanding or professionally progressing.

The London case study, by contrast, has an extensive portfolio of contracting experiences with a range of funding bodies, such as, the local authority, the Home Office, Probation services, Working Links, and the Primary Care Trust. The breadth of different funders demonstrates the organisation's strategic and entrepreneurial drive to seek new opportunities in different policy fields outside the traditional funding sources, and stepping up to the challenge of being commissioned to deliver various public services. This case study is larger than the others and has the capacity to deliver various contracts. However, the size of the organisation is also down to the wide range of funding sources that contribute to the organisation's income, *'I think we have 27 income streams at any one point, which is across broadly 12 different projects'*. Having a broad range of funding types has also been key for the organisation, recognizing the advantages of the different types of funding, such as some unrestricted sources funding the undesired aspects of services, whilst others contribute to the organisation's overheads.

There are clear advantages for the case study expanding into different policy fields and accessing substantial long-term contracts. On the other hand it can be challenging trying to balance the different issues and tensions that may arise in the different policy fields, particularly when policy fields are targeted by different budget cuts. However, the organisation had showed signs of shifting funding dependency from grants on to contracts



(Benson, 2014). Although respondents noted that large contracts that contribute significantly to overheads would be detrimental if they were put out for retender.

*'We have to win it. That's all it is at the end of the day. But that is a contract, that is different to grant funding and it generally lasts for longer, it generally makes a more generous contribution to your overheads, that's why I think it is important that the organisation of our size has your grant income and has your contractual income...it is so important'.* (Deputy Director, London case study)

There is a clear difference in this case study's breadth and depth of contracting experience, which points to the characteristics of the organisation - 'risk-taking', 'entrepreneurial' - but is also illustrative of the London context being a more market-driven and competitive environment than the other two locations, which explains certain signs of hybridity – to be discussed.

### **6.2.3. Experiences from grant arrangements**

All three case studies argue the funding environment has always been competitive to navigate, even before the economic crisis, due to negative connotations attached to migration and funding sources being oversubscribed by the number of TSO applicants. The case studies have been most successful in obtaining charitable trust funding, and this has remained a substantial funding source for each organisation over the years. It has remained about half of the income for the South West and London case studies, whereas it has been around two-thirds of the West Midlands' income but sometimes more. This raises questions about charitable trusts being pushed to fund public services

and preventing funding for innovative projects - in section 7.1.5 it will be demonstrated how this is forcing a decline in the case studies providing community development work. The case studies were partially successful in obtaining charitable trust funding, due to working in isolation within their geographical locations. The organisations have delivered specialised services, targeting specific marginalised social groups, in geographical locations where there is a high demand for these services, which means there has been limited direct competition by other TSOs in the area. This has placed the case studies in a strong bargaining position when applying for funding opportunities (Chew and Osborne, 2008, 2009).

A particular challenge identified by all three case studies was the 'precarious funding cycle', which referred to charitable trusts funding projects with grants for one or two years, with limited opportunities for continuation funding. This arrangement allows more TSOs to access this funding source, however it can create financial vulnerability and challenges for the organisations to produce financial forecasts, and to ensure the funding continues to overlap. Occasionally gaps would occur in funding cycles, and the organisation would have to respond by pooling resources or using reserves to cover staff costs to prevent redundancies until another funding source could be secured. This crisis mode of adapting and shuffling finances was not always successful, and in some instances redundancies were made over the years.

To overcome these additional pressures from continually applying for different funding streams to maintain service delivery, the case studies applied for more substantial, long-term grants, such as, from the Big Lottery Fund. This was seen to have attractive qualities in supporting marginalised social groups, and to create more workforce security and enable more sustainability to plan further into the future. For the West Midlands and London case studies the Big Lottery Fund has been an essential funder, supporting the organisations to expand their workforce and service provision:-

*'Long term investment in an organisation is really important. Five years of Big Lottery or any funding, which is like £120,000 a year will give you a base to build from....Two year funding cycles mean you are constantly juggling loads of balls and you know that none of them are continuing for a long period so you are thinking this is ending at this point. So you need to think about what's coming after that, whilst also having that same thought for different projects that are ending on different dates throughout the whole year, you are constantly in this kind of cycle.'* (Deputy Director, London case study)

In contrast, the South West case study has resisted applying to the Big Lottery Fund, believing that the funding is associated with gambling and comprises money that has been taken from the most deprived within society. These morals and values are deeply rooted in the actors' religious beliefs and have been influential on the decision-making process for its financial strategy. Although it could be viewed as a disadvantage for the organisation's progression, in not accessing larger amounts of funding, this organisation has instead channelled resources to accessing donations from faith communities that fit more in line with the actors' belief framework. This strategy was also maintained by the

front-line staff, as one respondent claimed they would resign if their post was funded by the Big Lottery due to the connotations of gambling conflicting with their religious values:-

*'It's like taxing the alcohol industry to pay for a little bit of the NHS- just doesn't seem right, doesn't sit well. But you are using a vice to get some good out of it, it's gambling....If my role was...lottery funding I wouldn't work here, because I am not allowed to take any money that's been coming through gambling so to speak and that lottery money has been used for gambling, so I wouldn't do it due to my religion.'* (Adviser, South West case study)

The West Midlands and London case studies highlighted the advantages of accessing larger funding amounts, providing the opportunity to have a more long-term focus to develop systems and processes to maximise service efficiency. When the respondents discussed the Big Lottery Fund the organisation had to work hard, under a lot of strain and pressure, to complete the complex process to get to this level of stability. Significant amounts of time and resources are required for just one funding bid, the process often taking over a year, with no certainty that it will be successful. This supports literature that argues small or medium-sized organisations would not have the appropriate capacity or expertise to be able to compete in this demanding and onerous process (Crees et al., 2016). A respondent from an infrastructure organisation in the South West described how their organisation could not provide the support for small organisations that were seeking help with Big Lottery Fund applications due to how increasingly laborious it had become over the years:-

*'When the lottery first came to be... it was like it was a breath of fresh air, because they went out of their way to set up the programmes to be open, to be flexible, and to have a*

*positive approach...you filled in the forms, and you jumped through the hoops, but you could get the funding. As time has gone on,...they have become quite prescriptive and have made it really difficult because of all their expectations of the applicants..... Because on the one hand they are saying...the project needs to be based around needs that are identified by users, and users are shaping the work that happens, it is that way round....But they say they want to know the outcomes. You can't have it both ways. And they have become too clever by half, they are not allowing people that freedom to actually know their subject better than the lottery for example.'* (Employee, South West infrastructure organisation)

This is a fairly critical extract on the Big Lottery Fund applications that demonstrates changing funding relationships. It also raises concern about stifling an organisation's ability to be innovative by having to determine outcomes and hitting performance measurements. Although the West Midlands and London case studies claimed their ability to be innovative or flexible had not been altered, it was evident the funding process influenced the organisations to take on particular norms and systems associated with this culture. This coercive isomorphism was demonstrated by the organisations implementing and following similar bureaucratic monitoring and reporting requirements, and shifting the services to become outcomes focused. For example, the Big Lottery is now keen to record and demonstrate the longer term impact of the projects it funds, often focusing on the terms 'impact' and 'legacy' (Mckinney and Kahn, 2004).

These processes and systems had been integrated into the normative work culture and have influenced the West Midlands and London case studies to undergo a level of professionalisation (Harris et al., 2001), illustrated by the respondents increased desire for efficiency, and evidently demonstrating a level of homogenisation across the case studies (see section 8.2.1). This was also enforced by external cultural pressures to conform in a professional manner whether this is through reporting or communication skills. In contrast to McKinney and Kahn (2004) this funding source was viewed positively, providing the opportunity to expand, gain stability, increased external legitimacy, and in some aspects the organisation welcomed the new level of professionalism. These factors could explain how the organisations have rationalised adopting these changes as the normative way of working.

#### **6.2.4. Performance measurements and accountability**

In contrast to literature showing the negative consequences of performance measurement (Carmel and Harlock, 2008; Milbourne, 2013) the case studies claim that the increase in monitoring and reporting has been beneficial for the progression of the organisations. All three case studies viewed this formalisation positively, by describing it as beneficial to assess the effectiveness of the services, to record and identify any emerging trends, and also to use the information for external purposes i.e. to highlight any positive outcomes to attract future stakeholders. As a result of the range of funding bodies requirements the case studies had implemented more efficient systems and processes to collect and record data. Again these changes in procedures and systems

can be viewed as coercive pressures from the external funding bodies, and to some degree there is a level of isomorphism across the three case studies adopting the new methods and approaches to monitoring. However, this was seen in varying degrees depending on the previous value given towards research by the organisations, and the capacity to manage these new processes.

Although these procedures had become normalized for the case studies this process was creating added pressure on the workforce to ensure the data was gathered correctly, to meet the necessary outputs, coupled with increasing demand on front-line services. Although the respondents highlighted positive features of the monitoring process, it was also described as onerous and taking essential time away from supporting service users. This supports the Chapman et al. (2008) notion of the 'burden of monitoring' and will be illustrated in section 8.2.1. as how this contributed to work intensification and pressures in the work place.

A main concern was that the bureaucratic processes required for monitoring and reporting were often disproportionate to the amount of funding received, for both grants and contracts. Due to the nature of the topic there were difficulties in measuring the less tangible outcomes appropriately, which were fundamental to the organisations' missions. It was thought this may affect which services were funded, for example, if it was not clear how these less tangible outcomes could be measured, such as, monitoring an individual's integration within society or social cohesion. The respondents discussed how the monitoring requirements given by the funders did not always match the services they

were providing, which meant the staff had to be creative about how the outputs and outcomes fit within the desired funder measurements:-

*'It's not the funding that shapes the services, but it is more about how you present it. It does sometimes feel like you're inventing things but you're not, it's not quite inventing things. But sometimes you are quite creative of your outputs.'* (Adviser, London case study)

Interviews with local authority members demonstrated how contractual arrangements involved a process of coercive isomorphism where the organisations were pressurised to adopt specific procedures and policies, and as illustrated below, *'a certain level of administrative ability'*:-

*'If we like it or not local authorities have to abide by the equality duty, we have to show due regard,... when you go into a contract and you are delivering this function for me it comes with baggage, and putting that in your invitation to tender in a way that is attractive to organisations, I was going to say it is difficult, but I think it is impossible.....you have to have a certain level of administrative ability in order to deliver a public sector contract.'*  
(Local authority member, South West)

The West Midlands Director claimed that demonstrating accountability was further heightened when funding unfavourable groups, and not wanting to fuel any further negative misconceptions:-



*'We have never ever had a lot of what people call tax payers money, ...even when it is not government money, it is charitable trust money, it is still money that you are given in good faith so the least you can do is have the proper systems in place. Especially with the kind of work we do. With an organisation that is already working with an unpopular group, to have even the slightest hint of mismanagement of funds you may as well just jump off a bridge. You may as well just press the self-destruction button.'* (Director, West Midlands case study)

The case studies acknowledge that in recent years they have had to become increasingly accountable, by having dedicated staff members for finance, funding bodies wanting more thorough financial reports for funding bids, and some funding bodies making excessively onerous demands i.e. European funding noted to be 'just a bureaucratic nightmare'.

In comparison to some commentators (Buckingham, 2009) there was little discussion on contracts affecting the innovation of the organisations, due to the case studies stating they negotiated the terms and arrangements with the funding bodies. This was echoed by a local authority member illustrating the flexibility in contractual arrangements:-

*'If that contract is so focused on doing that piece of work and it's not meeting those outcomes, it might need a different way to meet those outcomes. And to be honest if people meet those outcomes and it's legal I don't care how they do it. Just get it done....Some of our contracts are far too rigid, we say to people we want you to do this*

*number of hours, to this number of service users in this number of ways, is that really what we want? Or do we want them to meet these outcomes? I think all commissioners will acknowledge it is that way.'* (Local authority member, West Midlands)

### **6.2.5.     Scaling up and rolling out contracts**

The vignette below describes one commissioning experience of the London case study, for its interpreting services, and illustrates the challenges and tensions that have developed over the years as a result of the increasingly hostile and competitive commissioning environment (Milbourne and Cushman, 2015; Benson, 2014). Although the other two case studies do not have as extensive commissioning experiences by being fairly 'sheltered' from this hostile commissioning environment, the respondents described numerous similar experiences within the local third sector. These were experiences of the shifting funding environment that were having knock-on effects on the organisations' service provision, and generally creating a feeling of uncertainty and distrust within the operating environment.

#### **'We have to win it. That's all it is at the end of the day'**

Over ten years ago the local authority had commissioned the organisation to conduct research into the local area due to its expertise and acting as a gatekeeper into hard to reach communities. One piece of research was to understand the language dimension of the local community, due to concern from the local authority about the interpreter service provider it was using. The research aimed to unpack the demographics of the

area, the languages required to meet the need, and a bottom up approach to problem solving. Following this the local authority decided to re-commission the service, but rather than going out to tender it was put to the case study to develop a model that addressed these issues but also benefited the local economy.

Following this the organisation set up an interpreting enterprise that has employed local community members and provides interpreters to 10 GPs within the local area. The service has run successfully on an annual rolling contract of approximately £300,000. However, with the public expenditure cutbacks this all looks likely to change as the local authority is currently planning to re-tender the interpreting services. This time the local authority wants a prime contractor to cover a larger geographical area, and therefore more GP services, fuelled by the intention of cutting costs. This has raised major concerns for the organisation that *'if it is tendered again we are also going into competition, it opens the doors to others, so that is a threat as well'*.

With the increasing scale of the new tender the organisation no longer thinks it will have the capacity to meet these demands. The contract requirements are favouring larger national companies, which already have the capacity and systems in place to deliver a large contract at a cheaper cost. One option is for the organisation to collaborate with others, although there are concerns this could undermine the quality of the services and the ethical values of the organisation. One example was cutting staff costs:-

*'We are obviously not big enough to go it alone, but if we have to partner what are the things we can trade in, how do we maintain our quality. And those issues become crucial. This is on a background of clearly making interpreting a low priority thing ...[private agency] would like to cut on what they are paying at the moment. They would*

*like to cut what they are paying per hour, people are paid £35 an hour they would like to cut it to 25 or 20 or something like that.'*

*Case study: London*

*Sources: Author's fieldnotes, interviews, case study research report*

The vignette demonstrates how the commissioners' priorities have changed. To drive costs down the respondents claimed the commissioners were looking to outsource fewer contracts, with the idea of a 'prime' contractor looking after one big contract that would cover broader geographical areas. Subsequently, all three case studies recounted that various small organisations in their localities had disappeared, along with a decline in specialized local expertise and community relationships, on which the case studies had been interdependent for various complementary services e.g. domestic violence, night shelters. This demonstrates how the increasingly competitive environment was putting pressure on the case studies both directly, trying to meet the requirements for their own specific contracting arrangements, and indirectly, by the neighbouring policy fields being squeezed and reducing supplementary provision. The West Midlands and South West case studies experienced limited direct negative contracting experiences, however both examples experienced a ripple effect on the services they deliver. This extract supports the notion that this funding arrangement can contribute to polarization by squeezing smaller organisations out that are unable to compete in this environment:-

*'....that experience and local knowledge they had built up, boom, gone, and the local knowledge is not something you can sneeze at it is something that is born and evolved....The experience I have had with [name of national charity] coming in with [area*

*of work] is appalling because they get the big contracts, stack up the money, local groups fall by the way side and because they are so big they cannot deliver at the same level. So the work at the ground is not as good as it could have been because they are applying a format or process that has worked somewhere else and not in tune with the nuances or what is needed locally.'* (Employee, South West infrastructure organisation)

The South West and London case studies described examples of commissioners threatening for several years to put contracts out to re-tender, although many contracts were rolled on an annual basis and there was the perception that the local authorities would never get round to re-commissioning. The South West thought that a specific rolling contract had been forgotten about. Although grateful to still be receiving funding from the contract, it places the organisation in a position of insecurity and unease, or as Crouch (2011) found, can develop a loss of confidence in the commissioners. The vignette example was of a contract that provided a substantial amount of unrestricted funding to the organisation's overheads, hence the extract previously declaring '*We have to win it. That's all it is at the end of the day*'. These empirical findings support literature that describes tendering as creating feelings of uncertainty, confusion and heightened pressure within an organisation (Packwood, 2007; Buckingham, 2009), and in the case of re-tendering is a 'gathering storm' creating emotional upheaval (Cunningham et al., 2014).

In comparison to the period when the London service was initiated, they found this time round the commissioning process to be completely top down and with little regard to

community local expertise as previously described (Benson, 2010; Crouch, 2011). Unfortunately, the London case study was facing multiple contracts going out to re-tender at the same time. This was increasing stress levels and work intensification within the organisation, with the fear of losing these contacts simultaneously. In some instances, the case study was confident that they would win the re-tender, as a result of the reputation it had built with the local authority and the third sector previously delivering the service, but ultimately due to the belief that other organisations would refrain from competing for the tender. However, in this current economic climate this idea of ‘staying off one another’s turf’ could be fairly misguided.

The South West case study is a small player in the contracting process and found little competition for this position due to being a specialized service in a rural area (Cunningham, 2008). Respondents described being actively sought by the ‘prime’ contractor, using narratives such as ‘sniffing around’ to illustrate the process, by being identified as a key gatekeeper with specialised expertise. The respondents described the organisation’s role in some contracts as a ‘tick box exercise’, or otherwise known as ‘bid candy’ (Benson, 2014), to demonstrate the tender targeting marginalised groups, and strengthening the bid’s competitive position.

*‘...with HIV there are two distinct groups that [the government] are more focused on, which is men that sleep with men and sub-Saharan Africans... And where on earth do you meet sub-Saharan Africans, oh [South West name]’ will do....because we are the easiest way to work with all new commuting sub-Saharan Africans... So the amount is too small to be commissioned, so they put us into the big contract and said to the people who*

*won the contract, we want you to be in control of the contract, but we want you to give [South West name] this particular part.'* (Adviser, South West case study)

The experience from the London case study was of commissioners trying to reduce number of contracts by encouraging TSOs to enter into a consortia. The respondents were highly critical of the significant amount of resources and capacity involved in this process for an overall smaller contract, which, when divided between the organisations, would be an even smaller proportion. The London case study was undergoing this process for one of the advice streams, which they feared would be lost to a national organisation. Although this case study had the required experience and skills from managing other contracts, the employee bidding for the consortia was concerned about limited capacity to mediate between the numerous organisations, or the right business skills to negotiate on *'who should have what share of the contract'*. Instead, the respondent felt it was too resource consuming for the amount of funding that would be received, providing examples on how small or medium organisations could be shut out of this process:-

*'Also now there seems to be a hideous brave new world of consortia bidding. What has been a move towards partnership working over the past few years is becoming monolithic contract bids, with a lead partner heading up 12 or 13 organisations in some cases with a reduced post so people get smaller slices. So that might fund core services but it can't possibly service the infrastructure and everything else that an organisation relies on and that's the idea, you know they want to cut out all of the overheads and centralize*

*that....and how the hell that is going to be worked out by who gets what slice to deliver exactly what, is really hard to say.'* (Adviser, London case study)

#### **6.2.6. Private-third sector partnerships**

With the growth in market-like commissioning particularly pushed during the period of Coalition government, the respondents were conscious of the expanding role the private sector was playing in outsourcing public services. There was growing concern about private agencies becoming the 'prime' contractor and by commissioners pushing for more private-third sector relationships, resulting in TSOs becoming the sub-contractors. This created lively debate within the case studies on how these private-third sector relationships may conflict with the organisations' ethos and values and be detrimental to the quality of service delivery. For example, private agencies would be more inclined to lower overheads to create competitive cost cutting prices, whereas, the previous vignette on interpreting services demonstrates how this conflicts with the case study's values to pay employees a living wage. Here one Director expresses his concern about this shift in commissioning relationships:-

*'Again this is all the history of how the voluntary sector ceases to be the voluntary sector you know....they lose the rationale of it, they lose the relationship with the community, they lose passion of the workers who were, you know, doing the work and innovating that stuff... Losing the whole point.'* (Former Director, London case study)

Such funding arrangements were not as apparent in the ASR sector other than the work with private housing agencies e.g. G4S. However, the London case study had additional



experiences due to overlapping in other policy areas that had privatized fields, such as, the Probation Service. The respondents were not despondent about going into partnerships with private companies, with the rationale that it was 'better than nothing' and would prefer to be involved in the service delivery to ensure it was client-focused, and not solely delivered by private agencies. However, these thoughts were starting to waver during the fieldwork, due to the belief TSOs no longer had the skills and capacity to compete competitively for contracts due to shifting contract ideals. A major concern for all three case studies was the likelihood of partnerships with global companies, such as G4S and Serco. For the London case study this was a particular issue with the Work Programme and was on the horizon due to changes in commissioning with Probation Services. This raised ethical dilemmas for the respondents about whether the organisations should go into partnership with these global companies (Corporatewatch, 2010; Corporatewatch, 2012). The extract below illustrates how this ethical dilemma created tensions within the case study due to these companies been charged with alleged violent behaviour towards ASRs in their detention centres:-

*'.... the work programme contract, all of those multiple contracts which went to the local authority were rolled into one working contract which mainly went to the private sector. We had the choice back then to work with people like Serco and G4S to be partners with them to deliver the same kind of work. Employment work. We decided to close that down as an area of work rather than work with them, which meant job losses internally. So if you are asking what it would mean, it would mean that we would not continue with that*

*work. But when you have a multiple income stream you are not pushing yourself into that corner.'* (Deputy Director, London case study)

Association with negative corporate behaviour was not only detrimental to the organisation's reputation and credibility with funders and external stakeholders, but more importantly how they were perceived by service users and the organisation's authenticity. Section 7.2.9 will describe the developments since this interview of top down pressures from the board for the organisation to form a partnership with G4S, with evidence demonstrating internal conflict and tension. Firstly, the case study could either be pushed into partnerships with these global companies, where the respondents thought heavy restrictions could be enforced and may be detrimental to the organisations' credibility and reputation. Or they could resist this partnership but instead be pressured into adopting more business-like characteristics to build a stronger position to compete against such private agencies – a case of mimetic isomorphism.

### **6.3. Diversification of state-third sector relationships**

Empirical evidence demonstrates that the three case studies had different types of relationships with their local authorities. This diversity is mainly dependent on the type of funding relationship developed over the years, the impact of the public expenditure cutbacks, and the degree of sympathy each local authority had to the social purpose. The West Midlands case study demonstrates the complexities and 'messiness' of the

relationship between the organisation and the local authority as a result of ongoing negotiation to obtain support for the services it provides.

The case study has developed and maintained some strong relationships with particular individuals within the local authority. These local authority members acknowledge and appreciate the services the organisation delivers, relieving pressure from public services, and are champions within the local authority (Macmillan et al., 2007). However, this supportive approach has not been echoed across the local authority, demonstrated by the hands-off financial support over the years to deliver what are, in essence, public services. Respondents claim this stems from a political rationale, and the negative connotations attached to the local authority appearing to spend public money on supporting asylum seekers.

*‘There has been reluctance over the years for the local authorities to fund us and I think that is partly to do with our local paper,...which could easily make stories about diverting public funds to the underserving foreigners...we have been in meetings with them when they have said ‘oh I think we should give you more money’, but it never materialized mainly because I think of the resistance of the politics of who you give money to. There is a nursery closing here and you are giving money to foreigners.’* (Chair, West Midlands case study)

The media is described as playing a significant role in the reluctance in the local authority to offer financial support. This has raised conflicting views within the case study. First,

respondents believe that this has indirectly placed the organisation in an advantageous position by avoiding a situation where it could become reliant on local authority funding. This has meant the organisation has strived over the years to have a mixed portfolio of funding, although still wanting to access some local authority funding, but has resulted in the financial crisis having limited direct impact on the organisation's income:-

*'We never had statutory funding to the point that it would have been disastrous for us. There was a healthy mixture before the recession, and I think we are getting to the position where there is a healthy mixture now. We have never ever been in a position where one or two statutory funds ending would bring the organisation down. Never. What we have worked really really hard for in the previous 6/ 7 years [to access local authority funding] was finally in place for a couple of years before the recession and it was cut again. That cut didn't break us down, it didn't result in us making any cuts to the services in any way.'* (Director, West Midlands case study)

Second, the reluctance from the local authority to support the organisation financially has created some underlying tension within the organisation, due to criticism it has not been financially recognised for the services it provides or the contribution it makes to the local geographical area. Respondents claimed that the organisation's services were subsidising mainstream provision at no cost, even though prior to the financial crisis the organisation had been strategically motivated to obtain local authority funding. This feeling of being undervalued acted as a driver in fuelling workforce convictions in supporting this marginalised group, and to not turn any service user away without some form of support, due to acknowledgement of mainstream failure.

*'It can be very frustrating to see statutory agencies, and I don't necessarily mean the local authorities, statutory agencies are very comfortable with you doing their work, but find it very hard at the same time when it comes to what matters, which means let's have a financial relationship.'* (Director, West Midlands case study)

In contrast, the South West case study had long-standing funding relationships with its local authority, which span back to an initial fund to start-up the organisation. The local authority was involved due to the rise in concern that local social services did not have sufficient resources or expertise to support the needs of the increasing numbers of asylum seekers in the local area. Accessing this support was also aided by a key founder, who subsequently became the Chair, being a well-networked and respected member of the community. The start-up funding enabled the organisation to become established and recruit paid staff, however this financial support did drop off at one point. Another local contract was successfully won through Supporting People, which has been a significant contributor to the organisation's income over the years. This cross-sector partnership has been delivered in a hands-off manner by the commissioner, with little interference in the delivery of the contract, the organisation shaping the service to meet the need, and producing a monthly update more as a token gesture. The respondents claimed that the financial crisis also had limited direct impact, due to the organisation not being primarily dependent on local authority funding. However, there was fear that this current ring-fenced contract was on the horizon to go out to tender.

This case study faces additional challenges due to the complexities of operating within a two-tier local authority context. There were few links with the city council, with only a small grant that was given towards providing advice. This continuation of the grant was noted to be a result of creative rebranding to fit into the current local authority agenda. Similar to the West Midlands case study there were concerns that the city council were unsympathetic to supporting asylum seekers due to the political nature of the issue:

*'It is actually quite hard to engage with the politicians at one point [name of infrastructure organisation] were trying to change how the council interacted, so ran these events where we would go and talk about the work we were doing with the grants that they were giving us. And so I have been in the city chambers and tried to explain to the councillors what we do, and most of them don't have a Scooby do, from downright racism from councillors, through to a big shrug.'* (Director, South West case study)

Some positive relationships were described with the county council. Again this was developed with particular individuals who were sympathetic to the social purpose and supportive towards the services the organisation delivered. In contrast to the other two case studies, the relationship was described as being more on a 'friendlier and informal' basis. An interesting comparison was provided by a local authority member who had not only worked in the refugee third sector and two tier local authority, but also had experience working in London. She described how the relationship in a rural area was more informal and approachable, whereas in London it lacked a personal touch and was purely based on a professional manner:

*'...in London I didn't feel like there was any relationship, and that was me sitting in the voluntary sector in a migrant organisation. But when I came to [location name] I was quite surprised about how chummy, you know like everyone knew each other. So it was all like 'oh how you are? And how are your daughters?'... They would know each other and know their relatives and so on, but that is partly being about a smaller city, it's 100,000 people. If you are brought up here you are going to know all these people- it seemed much friendlier and a closer relationship when I got here, and I guess some of that still exists.'*

(Local authority member, South West)

In comparison the London case study had a more substantial relationship with the local authority, not only from a funding perspective, but also working collaboratively on various issues within the community. As a consequence of its longevity, the case study has experienced different government administrations being in power that evidently informed different state-third sector relationships. A clear distinction was made by the respondents on the shift when Labour came into power (in 1997), and the organisation was able to access different pots of local authority funding ring fenced for social exclusion and marginalised deprived social groups in geographically identified deprived areas (Durose and Rees, 2012). The organisation experienced different ways of working collaboratively with the local authority in a range of capacities, meetings, forums, research, engagement events and service provision, illustrating the political ideology at that time of community-level solutions to problems (Ellison and Ellison, 2006; Rummery, 2006). For example, the case study and local authority set up a local forum for community organisations in the locality, where local issues could be raised, to collaborate together, with the intention to

deliver localised services. In this case study there was a strong emphasis on the organisation conducting research, or holding forum events with local community organisations, to highlight local issues and concerns with the purpose of feeding back to the local authority and influencing policy.

*'It is not something where I say...you need to deliver an improvement in policy, their job is for them to bring what they can uniquely and bring insight and we find the relevant bits of council to turn that into something new. I have to say of all the organisations that we have worked with [case study name] gets how to have a policy influence better than any other organisation.'* (Local authority member, London)

This describes a different type of relationship, not only based on funding or as a service provider, but also recognising that the organisation has valuable expertise, skills and can act as a gatekeeper to certain communities, which is acknowledged to be useful in policy development. Similar to the other case studies, these relationships are founded on key individuals where a positive rapport has been built over years. This breadth and depth of state-third sector relationship can partially be explained by the case study being situated in a local authority that has extreme levels of deprivation and a well-established multi-cultural community. This has influenced the local authority to be sympathetic to targeting services to support deprived communities, particularly marginalised ethnic minority communities, and there has been an emphasis on supporting local TSOs to deliver these services.

*'... there is a figure that there is a third sector organisation for every 6 households here. It has just got this massively huge activist radical tradition of, you can't move for third*



*sector organisations in this borough....people come to help with the poorest of the poor in the UK in this sort of blighted part of London and that is still a massive legacy here, and there are waves of faith communities that have carried these on. So the Jewish communities, Christian organisations, and now Muslim organisations, which has given us a hugely complex third sector landscape but has also given a very successful migrant community, migrant communities here are politically successful.'* (Local authority member, London)

Several years ago around half of the organisation's income came from various departments within the local authority, financing different parts of the service streams i.e. advice service, research and forums, community engagement and the interpreting services outlined in the previous section. This financial support came through a mixture of grants, contracts and involved experiences in the commissioning and tendering process. These past experiences of commissioning were reflected on positively, the respondents convinced the contractual arrangements had not tampered with the organisation's innovation or autonomy, by feeling they were able to negotiate with the grant officer on the terms and requirements. Even so the breadth and depth of the relationships with the local authority clearly had coercive pressures on the organisation, to conform to the culture and the rules of the game, particularly as the London context was founded on a more formal and professional environment. It was evident this partially explained the more professional characteristics compared to the other two case studies, and it will be discussed in Chapter Seven, on how the organisation has undergone a process of hybridity (Skelcher and Smith, 2015).

Although the London case study had developed dependency on these different local authority funding streams, the respondents claimed the cutbacks had little direct effect. Rather it was the changes in policy that had the most detrimental impact on the organisation. The respondents claimed policies pushing for privatization and more competitive commissioning were creating challenges for the organisation to compete in this increasingly hostile environment, particularly with the threat of several contracts being re-tendered (see previous section). This case study had demonstrated the most positive, progressive and dynamic relationships with the local authority, it will be discussed in section 6.3.2. how subsequently these relationship had been seriously damaged by the indirect effects of the public expenditure cutbacks.

### **6.3.1. Reputation, credibility and legitimacy**

The case studies' relationships with the local authority were evidently diverse and dependent on capacity, funding, individuals and locality. Other narratives used were '*reputation*' and '*credibility*' to explain how these successful relationships were established. The organisations had developed positive reputations due to recognition of the services delivered, specialised expertise, and language skills. However, this was not viewed as a static process but required continuous resources through different mechanisms, such as, leadership and networking (see Chapter Eight) to place the organisations in strong bargaining positions for future opportunities. For example, the West Midlands Director stressed in meetings the importance of delivering services in a professional manner to build its external reputation and credibility with the local authority stating '*...obviously having a successful track record puts you in a better place than*

*somebody who doesn't and successful track record needs to go along with reputation because, it just simply needs to be part of that.'* (Director, West Midlands case study)

This coercive pressure to conform to the dominant culture, of operating in a professional manner that is favoured by the local authority, explains why organisations adopt similar formal structures. This process is justified by making the organisation appear legitimate, which then places the organisation in a strong position to obtain further opportunities and resources, or as Dart (2004) describes *'from this legitimacy flows benefits'* (p.415).

This idea of legitimacy of which reputation and credibility form a part is defined by Suchman (1995) as *'a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are socially desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions'* (p. 574). The case studies have been susceptible to legitimacy-seeking behavior by being placed in a disadvantaged position from the politicized nature of migration, and acting as a means of survival. This demonstrates legitimacy to be culturally embedded (Suchman, 1995) and influences the case studies to behave in a particular manner, in order to seek legitimacy and form a stronger position within the field. These power dynamics were continually being negotiated, particularly in the West Midlands example that received the least financial support. What became evident was that this legitimacy-seeking behavior could be rewarded by winning contracts and forming collaborations reinforcing these norms and values. For example, the London case study was able to gain a stronger bargaining position by conforming to the socially constructed system of norms and increasing in associated legitimacy :-

*'...with the [name] forum we were able to push some quite progressive approaches to migration because we had senior people who were championing what we were doing. You had political buy-in from high council officers. I think we still have a reputation and we still have people who really like our work, but yeah maybe that stuff might be more difficult moving forwards.'* (Deputy Director, London case study)

The concept of 'moral legitimacy', associated with ethical principles, purpose, and value, is also fundamental to understanding the third sector's strategic positioning. As Taylor and Warburton (2003) describe *'these values are likely to encompass not only values about what they do and what others want to do, but values on how they do it'* (p.324). 'Moral legitimacy' is essential for several reasons. Firstly, the respondents believed that being associated with a strong mission and values added to the authenticity and legitimacy of the organisation. It was thought the local authority perceived them as client-focused and driven by quality rather than profit. Secondly, although some organisations struggled to gain a strong position within the field, the individuals' moral conviction to support the humanitarian cause was essential in maintaining drive, commitment and a strong work ethic (see Chapter Eight) within the case studies. 'Moral legitimacy' frames why these case studies were formed due to the belief in 'mainstream failure' and the motivation to continue to navigate a challenging and hostile environment.

### **6.3.2. Loss of finance, trust and organisational intelligence**

All three local authority areas have been targeted with significant public expenditure cutbacks, evidenced by the case studies' and local authority members' accounts of the disproportionately targeted cutbacks towards the third sector in those localities. This was described as affecting the relationships with the case studies, as well as a detrimental effect across the third sector in these localities.

Whilst the West Midlands case study showed a hands-off funding relationship, the interviews with the local authority members predicted that this would be the direction of all relationships with TSOs. The local authority members described that future relationships with commissioners and TSOs are less likely to be based on funding, but will shift to play a supportive role in enabling TSOs to find external means of funding. Presumably, the rationale is for the organisations to continue to provide public services without using public expenditure, and consequently shrinking back the size of the state:-

*'To be honest for commissioners that is very new, because we were the ones that used to control the purse strings. But now it's not about controlling the purse strings but being also a support organisation for them [TSOs]. Because we want our services to continue to exist in [name], we need to find ways for them to continue to exist, and the best way is to support them getting external grants.'* (Local authority member, West Midlands)

The case study respondents were sympathetic to the reality that the local authorities had faced drastic public expenditure cutbacks, involving departments closing down, mergers

and detrimental reductions in services. The respondents were aware that the previous state-third sector funding relationship was unlikely to continue due to the cutbacks already implemented. They were conscious that there were still more cutbacks to come, and the full impact had not yet been felt.

Although the case studies recognized and understood that cutbacks had come from central government, there was still a feeling the cuts had been disproportionately targeted at the third sector within the localities. The respondents felt the designated funds had become detrimentally low. A major criticism, which the local authority members also supported, was how the comparatively hefty cuts had been implemented rapidly, not allowing TSOs appropriate time to adapt or respond. For those organisations that were heavily reliant on local authority funding this could have severe consequences on their chances of survival. This had created a rising feeling of distrust by the case studies towards the local authority, with claims the cutbacks had not been handled compassionately or fairly, and have consequently devalued any previous sense of equal partnership working.

*'...as a result in the last round of budget decisions, [the local authority] took the decision to cut a pretty huge swathe of community and voluntary sector funding. I think the cry from the sector was can you not cut slower, at least notify us, give us a chance and then we stand a fighting chance to look for alternative funding to put ourselves on a more stable footing. But the council, for whatever reason, did not feel able to do that, and that has now meant many organisations have been thrown in a state of crisis...and the*

*implications of that will be felt on the city for years and years to come.'* (Local authority member, West Midlands)

With the lack of funding opportunities, capacity, and the rise in distrust, it is not clear how even a 'supportive' relationship will be developed and maintained in the future:-

*'Obviously there are individual relationships with individual officers in the sector that are good.... But in terms of the council as a brand it is very much a tarnished brand in relation to the third sector, it's more than tarnished, it's a toxic brand and with the sector it really is. And that makes any kind of strategic approaches really quite difficult I think'* (Local authority member, West Midlands)

This rise in distrust of the state, both centrally and locally, was already founded in cynicism and apprehension due to the respondents perceiving previous policies, implemented to promote the rights and values of the third sector, as being undermined. The Compact developed by the Labour government in 1998 had outlined the shared principles of the state and third sector (Zimmeck, 2010) and promoted conditions for an equal playing field in the delivery of public services. The respondents reflected upon this as being a distant memory, and were unsure whether the Compact had ever had much value in the first instance. Both case study respondents and local authority members shared a similar despondent narrative. Several of the local authority members had been actively involved in writing the local compact, and although these individuals were aware of what the policy involved they admitted their concerns that this knowledge or recognition of the policy was not reflected across the local authority:-

*'...we spent ages thrashing out the Compact in [name of location]...it was a good document...and the voluntary sector could use it. They could say to a statutory body, look you are signed up to the Compact and what you are doing is not in line with that, and those Compacts were signed off at a senior level...But I think it was not a key document in the statutory sector, so there were officers like me going hang on a minute that's not in line with the Compact, and the Chief Exec would go 'what's the Compact again? Give me a copy of it'. It wasn't like tripping off their tongue...I suspect if I ran into the City Council now asking could you give me a copy of the Compact I don't think they would be able to find it.'* (Local authority member, South West)

All three case studies described that the shifting and merging of departments, less capacity, and rise in redundancies within the public sector, had been fundamental in breaking down trusting relationships that had been formed with key individuals. These key individuals previously acted as champions for the organisations, bridging the gaps between the sectors, but this shift could result in less opportunities for developing relationships.

*'...So I used to know loads of people in [name], I used to attend loads of meetings in [name], now there are no longer any boards, no more meetings to sit on. I ended up knowing one person in the local authority, where previously I would have known the head of social services, Chief Exec etc. All that changed, partly because of the Mayor and the politics, but mostly because they had cut back on these key posts and a grant officer could only manage a large grant.'* (Former Director, London case study)



Disadvantages were recognized by not having up-to-date information about funding situations, but mainly with local authority members moving around or leaving the sector, this would effect what was termed 'organisational intelligence'. All three case studies were concerned with key individuals leaving the local authority, not only reducing the number of sympathetic and supportive individuals within the sector, but also diminishing the knowledge of the history of the organisation and what services are provided. Going back to the concepts of reputation and credibility, it was felt this could be missed by grant officers and commissioners due to not having the same understanding of the organisation and the focus being on cutting costs rather than on quality.

*'...so much funding, I think, is dependent on your relationships with the people within the funding agency and certainly since the recession hit so many of the statutory agencies have been losing staff at a ridiculous rate. You will get a different monitoring officer every 6 months, as the next one is made redundant or they get temp staff, and it is really hard to establish a relationship with the authorities now because you never see the same person for very long, it is just ridiculous. They don't know why the service is set up in the first place. They don't understand. They are more worried about their own job than anything else, and they don't have the time to focus on you or build that...'* (Adviser, London case study).

#### **6.4. Summary**

This chapter has focused on a macro perspective to explore organisational change, and argues the wider context is complex and multi-layered. Unlike empirical studies and wider literature that tends to focus on one institutional regime - third sector organisations'

involvement in public service delivery - this research has demonstrated the wider context contains multiple exogenous factors, which overlap and inform one another. The case studies demonstrate three different trajectories on how the organisations interpret, experience and respond to the environment. A fundamental argument throughout the chapter is that organisations are not passive agents to the environment, but demonstrate organisational agency in navigating the wider environment.

The chapter began by looking at the horizontal exogenous pressures, from the ASR subsector. The most significant, and constant, challenge the organisations have faced over the years being from negative rhetoric towards immigration and xenophobic attitudes. Although described as creating challenges in accessing resources and obtaining public support, the research has highlighted these negative attitudes as placing the organisations in a strong strategic position. Given the politicised nature in accessing support and funding for this group the organisations have realised from early-on the importance of being strategic and resourceful, which in the long run has been fundamental in fuelling organisational survival and adopting a resilient mode in the recent turbulent times.

Nevertheless, the research showed concern during the 2015 general elections on rising negative rhetoric towards immigration, and how this would impact on external perceptions of the organisations' legitimacy. This will also create more hardship and complex cases for the services users for the organisations to support, increasing demand on services,

whilst encountering a continuous decline in resources. Since the study was conducted there has been the European referendum, heightening negative media and political coverage on migration, which will arguably continue throughout the process of the UK exiting the European Union. This will create more uncertainty for the organisations on how to continue to operate, whether the government will become increasingly hostile to these organisations, what impact this will have on the service users, what resources will be available, and how this will affect the quality of service delivery to support this group.

Looking vertically across the third sector, one example of the organisations negotiating the environment strategically, was by not becoming dependent on one type of funding, nor solely dependent on statutory funding. Therefore, all three case studies have aimed to develop a portfolio of revenue (Froelich, 1999), which has meant the organisations operate in a multifaceted funding landscape. The chapter argues the organisations have had varied experiences of the funding environment, through differing arrangements of delivering public services and undertaking contracts. This thesis argues that, across the funding sources (statutory contracts, Big Lottery Fund, charitable trusts), there has been an increase in funding arrangements placing more emphasis on bureaucratic systems, performance measurements, accountability, monitoring and evaluations. As a result of a decline in revenue, and increasing competition for resources creating a squeeze on resources, there has been normative isomorphic pressure for the case studies to adopt similar structures and processes to be able to compete successfully in this increasingly competitive funding environment. However, contrary to literature these shifts in

organisational behaviour are not seen as all negative but have been beneficial in developing the organisations to operate in a more effective formalised manner.

In recent years there has been major concern on the effect of the financial crisis and austerity measures over the third sector. Again the case studies have had varied experiences of budget cuts, depending on the amount of statutory funding received, and how its local authority has been affected. On the whole the organisations have been fairly unscathed by this wave of turbulence, mainly from having established a diversified revenue base, being unintentionally sheltered from the contract environment from the national refugee agencies, and having a competitive advantage as the only niche refugee service provider in their localities (Chew and Osborne, 2009). However, the knock-on effects from the public expenditure cutbacks have been felt through different avenues, such as the dramatic squeeze on national refugee agencies and services in other policy fields, which has decreased the scope of available services and heightened demand on the organisations' services.

The chapter also argued that there has been a decline in government support to TSOs, due to the evident shift in these case studies from positive third-state relationships to less support and funding available. This is played out through the detrimental cutbacks each local authority has faced, with hefty cuts being implemented in a hasty fashion for the third sector, and ultimately damaging the trust upon which relationships were originally based. The future outlook for third sector-state relationships looks bleak, with the decline

in trust, loss of organisational intelligence, and little prospect for future investment and capacity in building the relationships again. However, it is salient to remember a different story will be found for the third of TSOs that obtain statutory funding, and have continued some form of funding relationship with the state.

At this point the thesis has illustrated that a combination of different factors (identified by the case studies) have created challenges, tensions and pressures in how they navigate the operating environment. It has also highlighted how the shifting environment can have positive effects on organisational change, by organisations becoming more formalised and effective in the ways they are operating. What is particularly captured by the in-depth analysis outlined in the chapter is the fluid and dynamic nature of the wider context, and how this affects the organisations' trajectories at different stages along the journey. The research strongly suggests the environment is not static, but organisational agency is required to interpret the changes and respond appropriately. What is missing here is more understanding on how organisational and micro strategies are formed in response to the exogenous pressures, and how this informs the outcomes of organisational change. These are the focus of Chapter Seven and Eight.

# CHAPTER SEVEN: ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE IN ASYLUM SEEKER AND REFUGEE THIRD SECTOR ORGANISATIONS

## 7. Introduction

This chapter will move on from exploring the wider contextual environment and identified exogenous pressures, to focus on how these external factors are influential in shaping the case studies, and distinguish varying forms of organisational change. The purpose of this chapter is to investigate change at the organisation or meso-level, by answering the research question '*What changes have been made to organisational forms?*' This means exploring empirical evidence on the various internal processes, systems and structures that construct an organisation and how these have shifted, maintained or developed over the years. The aim is to understand why these changes have come about, the different dynamics that are influential to the decision-making process, and how the changes are interpreted by actors involved.

Further analysis uses the principles of isomorphism to describe how case studies operating in the same field have to standardize systems and structures to meet external requirements and accreditation. The analysis applies the institutional logics perspective to understand why organisations behave in a particular manner in certain settings, as 'institutional logics represent frames of reference that condition actors' choices for sense-making, the vocabulary they use to motivate action, and their sense of self and identity' (Thornton et al., 2012: 2). However, it is the agency in how these logics are interpreted and the shifts in logics drawn upon that provide some explanation of the occurrence of organisational change. The logics identified are inductively drawn out from the empirical

findings, including, community, professional, family-like, entrepreneurial, but are logics already developed within the institutional theory (see Chapter Five). Analytical perspectives on hybridisation will also be applied to explain the complexities of multiple institutional logics, and how this can create varying forms of hybrid organisations.

The chapter is separated into two sections. The first section looks at the strategies of organisational adaptation adopted by the case studies in response to the wider contextual environment. Organisational agency is explored through concepts of mission drift, refocusing service provision, diversifying resources and generating unrestricted revenue. The second section illustrates the process of organisational change by unpacking the different organisational layers, identifying the processes and systems, and how this creates complex organisational forms. The argument is broken down into stages, firstly, demonstrating how institutional pressures, such as quality marks and government enforced training, have influenced a baseline of homogenization in the case studies internal structures. Secondly, the section explores the heterogeneity of the case studies by outlining nuanced accounts of organisational culture, the different institutional logics drawn upon, and that it is interpretation and interaction between multiple logics that influence organisational behaviour. Thirdly, the governing boards are outlined as another organisational layer, illustrating that different layers can draw upon alternative institutional logics, and that how these different layers interact is essential to understand organisational responses and the varying forms of hybrid organisations produced.

## **7.1. Strategies of organisational adaptation**

The respondents were aware of the environment they were situated within, the various pressures that shape the organisations, and on reflection did not perceive the environment to be static. The organisations responded in various ways, not only in reaction to the external pressures, but strategically navigating the operating environment. This purposeful behavior can be explained by the politicised nature of the group and having to be strategic to survive in the current uncertain climate. The respondents often recount having to be aware of, and in some instances predict, the changing elements of the operating environment.

*'[London case study] changes because it needs to change, but it doesn't change in a way that contradicts our environment. The policy side...it is really important to know what is happening so we could notice the weather, you need to know if there are clouds on the horizon, if they are little clouds that are going to become big, or are they going to blow away with the next wind.'* (Trustee, London case study)

### **7.1.1. Mission flexibility**

The nature of the service users meant the case studies were dealing with a broad range of issues, from housing to mental health, and covered a diverse mix of demographics, including, nationality, ethnicity, and religion, who tend to have multiple complex needs. The case studies undertook a 'holistic' approach to supporting the service users, either through the organisation's services or referring to external agencies. The group includes a spectrum of different migrant categories, such as, asylum seekers, refugees, economic



and undocumented migrants, each coming with a different legal status and circumstances. The respondents describe using a 'pathway' process to support the service users through the different stages. Each stage has its own set of issues, expertise, restrictions and regulations, influencing the organisations to deliver a broad range of services e.g. advice, counselling, ESOL, employment, and community projects and engagement.

Advice services developed to become the core component of each organisation (for a full description see section 7.1.5), however, the case studies adopted different approaches to the additional services provided. For example, the South West case study differed by placing more emphasis on the emotional aspect of support, specifically on previous experiences of trauma. It delivered in-house counselling sessions and aimed to create a 'safe space' by the volunteers providing a hosting service to ensure a welcoming environment. The West Midlands focused on providing advice services, similar to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) model, albeit with immigration expertise and extensive language skills. The London case study had multiple service streams with the intention to have an impact on policy rather than acting as, what they termed, a 'bandage aid'. These different approaches depended on numerous factors, such as, resources, individual biographies and leadership, and the rationale towards service provision.

Over the years all three case studies' services have changed shape depending on what areas had been given priority and available resources. The table below demonstrates a

fairly broad approach to mission statements, focusing on providing support to new communities.

Table 7.8. Mission statements by case study

Case Study	Mission statement
<b>West Midlands</b>	To tackle urgent issues and disadvantage among asylum seekers, refugees and migrants within the [name of area] and promote long term solutions to the problems they face
<b>South West</b>	At [name of organisation] we offer support to those seeking asylum in [name of location], welcoming them when they arrive, advocating for them in their daily struggles, supporting them if they face being sent back as well as helping them adjust to their long term future if they are recognised as refugees
<b>London</b>	Our mission is to be with displaced communities, listening and acting through our common humanity to create and nurture reconciliation, human rights and social justice

The case studies have applied for various funding to provide a broad range of services, especially by undertaking a ‘holistic’ approach and a process of reflexivity:-

*‘I don’t think the mission statement should change... what is really important about [London case study] is being alongside people, that you just accompany people through different stages, and not just through the crisis, but long time accompaniment...and I think the way you do that is through a range of different services, but it’s about working alongside people and solidarity.’ (Deputy Director, London case study)*

This flexibility to deliver a changing range of services beyond a core advice provision has created a mixed portfolio of resources, and opened up new innovative opportunities and creative partnerships. This has been advantageous to the case studies’ survival.

Commentators would argue this continuous shift in services could impact on the client focused element, or result in ‘mission drift’ (Cairns, et al., 2005; Flynn, 1996), however this research demonstrates the mission can be focused on supporting the client group through this holistic approach, rather than providing a particular service to them. Following Bennett (2008), it may be advantageous to have a flexible approach to the organisation’s mission, whilst still maintaining a client focus, as mission ‘rigidity’ could inhibit the organisation’s survival in these uncertain times. To successfully maintain ‘mission flexibility’ a strong strategic direction, governance and reflexivity is required, as demonstrated in the negotiation process in applying for new funding revenue:-

*‘...there are these new contracts. We could go after these contracts, but will it take us away from our core purpose or will it strengthen the core purpose? And should we do that and go for it or not? So the ethical and the strategic and the good sense questions, what are we really about, who are we here for, what is our core purpose and best way to serve that audience?’* (Trustee, London case study)

This method of ‘mission flexibility’ has also been advantageous in ensuring some unpopular areas of activities that struggle to get funded have been cross-subsidised by more favoured services, a prime example being support for individuals with NRPF. The services to some degree have been shaped by external pressures (described in the following section), and this also illustrates the ability for case studies to be adaptable and flexible to the shifting environment. To acknowledge how the service users’ needs are changing, for services to not become out-dated, and also be open to search for new revenue:-

*‘...as the communities progress and you realize that there are quite a lot of issues that need dealing with, in relation to public health or in relation to education or housing or whatever. Then you go and talk to people who either are willing, in charitable trust sectors, who are willing to invest in that kind of issue, or people who are from statutory that are related to meeting that need. Then you need to argue with the statutory that you are meeting that need, why being done here is the efficient way, and that is an ongoing process’.* (Director, West Midlands case study)

What prevents these case studies from ‘mission drift’ is that the respondents are not only client focused but continue to have a strong sense of values towards the social purpose:-

*‘The strategy has always been be very clear about what you are doing...and what the needs of the beneficiaries are, then go and look for money for what you need’. And not ‘oh we need money lets go and see what money is available and then develop projects that sound suitable for that money.’* (Director, West Midlands case study)

This resilient core purpose at the root of the organisations’ service delivery is reinforced by the strategic direction from strong leadership and governance. The decision-making process is mainly undertaken by senior management and trustees who describe having boundaries on the types of activities and funding for which they will apply. There is a continuous process of reflexivity on the organisation’s objectives and external environment, which gives authenticity to the flexibility in how the mission is addressed:-

*‘I was discussing with the trustees the other day about how not to lose the core, because if you lose the core you lose the purpose of being,...Someone might suggest ‘why doesn’t*

*[organisation name] do such and such' and you look at it and you think 'actually that's not relevant to the core work'....So it is looking at things, and concentrating on what we are here to do which is to support asylum seekers and refugees and other migrants.'* (Director, South West case study)

### **7.1.2 Shifting service provision**

This section directly expands on the description in section 3.3.1. on TSOs increasingly being pushed to deliver public services. It demonstrates empirical evidence of the case studies struggling to continue to provide a broad range of services to the same degree. A range of institutional pressures were affecting the services, such as public expenditure cutbacks, stricter welfare reform, and a rise in xenophobic attitudes, which meant some services have declined where others have grown. For example, all three case studies have reduced additional services, such as ESOL, employment and training, supporting community groups, or outreach work in the community. Community projects included courses on baking, sewing, women only sessions and projects for young people. These services were focused more on improving wellbeing, raising awareness and cohesion. They can be put under a broad label of services concerned with integration, rather than filling gaps in public services and responding to emergency needs.

As a result of targeted government cutbacks there has been a decline in some services, such as, ESOL and RIES provision (see section 3.5.2.) that mainly focus on integrating migrants. This illustrates the government's prerogative for asylum seekers to be viewed

as a short-term issue rather than investing in the long-term integration of this group. Similar to Cairns et al. (2006) organisations were shifting towards delivering more public services with the focus moving from a community to individual responsibility:-

*'What's on the up are, and again I think it is about the change in legislation and the picture, is advocacy and advice. The biggies at the minute are around, I suppose, individual responsibility....So there has been a move towards that in the legislative picture, whether we like it or not what happens in Westminster has an impact on how we look on the street.'*

(Local authority, South West case study)

The increase in demand is explained by the changing nature of advice sought - initially on asylum claims and referrals, but in recent years increasingly restrictive and deterrent policies have created more complex issues (see section 2.4.2). Broader issues, such as, housing, welfare benefits, have meant staff have had to undergo specialised training courses and obtain qualifications to meet this need (demonstrated in section 7.2.1). A useful way to explain this increase in demand for advice services, is what Seddon (2008) terms 'failure demand'. This argues, the increase in demand is not a result of an increase in relative numbers of service user need, illustrated by the numbers of asylum seekers remaining fairly constant. Instead, it is the failure in systems and procedures in the previous processes not meeting these needs appropriately, that creates this rise in demand, and subsequently producing 'failure demand' (Advice UK, 2008). Service users are caught in a cycle of services, which the case studies demonstrate ultimately falls onto the responsibility of TSOs. This thesis shows the increasingly complex changes to immigration legislation, cuts to legal aid, and welfare reform, has created more complex

cases for the organisations to support (LBF, 2015), often drawn out due to bureaucratic systems and what they termed 'red tape'.

*'The whole area of advice was developed, because people were coming into us and the issues that they were being faced with and the challenges they were engaging with were changing. To being much more about the day to day stuff becoming the core focus'.*

(Deputy Director, London case study)

The decrease in wider external services has placed an added pressure on the case studies' capacity - hence having to 'reshuffle' resources to enable the continuation of these services. A simpler explanation described is that funders are also increasingly seeking to fund services that have more tangible outcomes and outputs, especially as resources are limited and competitive, rather than outcomes that may take years to achieve i.e. a refugee feeling integrated within the British community. This is described by reference to a recent redundancy of an outreach worker:-

*'If you had a certain amount of money to give, and you had the choice between case workers or [outreach worker] and you couldn't do both, you would say case workers, and I think it comes down to that basically. I have no doubt that if you have pots of money [outreach worker] is extremely valuable, evidencing the impact is extremely difficult'.*

(Fundraiser, West Midlands case study)

The case studies have all been pushed into redirecting limited resources to deliver public services and respond to essential emergency needs of the service users, such as providing advice on how to access housing, health, and food banks, so supporting the

wider literature (NCVO, 2015; Wilding, 2010). A concern around the decline in additional services is how this will affect the emotional wellbeing and long-term integration of the services users, by having limited impact in tackling prejudiced attitudes and promoting social cohesion. The few remaining services focused on community, integration and emotional support, are heavily subsidised by the case studies' unrestricted funds, heavy reliance on volunteers, or through connections with faith groups. For example, the London case study, formed initially to deliver community projects, continued to emphasise the importance of this stream, but was having to approach it in different ways. The organisation previously held an annual community event for the local area to encourage community engagement, raise awareness and promote cohesion. The local authority significantly cut this funding and the event is now delivered on a smaller scale, arguably with reduced impact. This shift in service focus is not from the case study drifting away from its mission, but rather is restricted by the operating environment with increased demand on advice services coupled with a decline in available resources.

Advice UK (2008) concerns were echoed in the empirical findings of the government wanting to shift the nature of the advice field to be delivered by fewer larger contracts, which would be 'serving the 'top down' interests of government than the 'bottom up' interests' (p.6). The South West case study described how the local authority was planning on tendering the advice contract, which was predicted to be won by the local CAB, due to its established links with government and national coverage. Smaller local agencies raised fears this would mean the end of their organisation, by not having the capacity to compete, which in their view would be detrimental to the advice sector in the



area. For example, the South West case study provides specialist advice that would not necessarily be continued by a more generic CAB service, resulting in the decline of local services and detrimental cuts to case studies' funding.

### **7.1.3. Diversification of resources and widening remit**

During the fieldwork the number of funding sources ranged (approximately) by case study from 26 in London, 20 in the West Midlands, and 20 in the South West. Part of successfully gaining funding, alongside capacity, reputation, and networking, is the skill of writing an effective funding application. This was demonstrated by narratives such as 'the art of writing' or 'playing a game of chess' used as metaphors to illustrate the complexities they faced when navigating this process. Those responsible for writing funding applications understood the 'rules of the game', by strategically deciding which funders to approach and when:-

*'So if I was doing a small funding bid I would talk about new arrival communities, because of the popular press on asylum seekers... I didn't realise what a fine art it is until I started... it really depends on who you are applying to, you look at who they have funded before, what sorts of things they have funded. And then tailor the application accordingly'.*  
(Fundraiser, West Midlands case study)

In terms of grant revenue respondents described the lack of continuation funding as frustrating and difficult to plan for the future. The respondents reacted to this by 'creative rebranding' of the services to appear to be focusing on a different aspect, but

fundamentally delivering the same service. Strategies were used in how they wrote funding applications, undertaking research beforehand on the funders, using specific terminology and buzzwords popular with that particular funder. Applications were written under a different primary category i.e. 'young people', 'women', or 'domestic violence' rather than ASRs. By redirecting the focus onto these areas the respondent believed this would place them in a stronger bargaining position (Chew and Osborne, 2008).

*'....they won't fund the same again. So we have to find a way of building on what we have already funded....Because you can always invent something. But you want to do things that you want and need to do. Because that is the other danger with charities that you are chasing bits of money, and...it's about not being diverted...,that actually whatever you do is meeting your strategic directives'.* (Current Director, London case study)

The importance of diversification was heightened by the example of Refugee Action and Refugee Council becoming dependent on one funding stream from the Home Office. These case studies were never solely reliant on statutory funding, however those that did access this revenue claimed they would not have the same level of dependency again. This demonstrated organisational agency by not wanting to become dependent on one income stream, or dependent on statutory funding. One method was to fund staff salaries and services from a range of different sources, the rationale being if one ends then services can still continue even if further overstretched.

Diversification of resources is not a new approach (Froelich, 1999) and has been identified in other research as a method of survival by TSOs (Nevile, 2010, Crouch, 2011), or as one respondent describes ‘not putting all your eggs in one basket’. A prime example of mission flexibility is all three case studies widening the remit to include Eastern European migrants. Respondents claimed that other agencies had not widened their remit due to fear of the negative connotations attached to Eastern European migrants in media and public debate (Balch and Balabanova, 2014). This has been advantageous to the case studies’ survival by broadening revenue even further, particularly in being able to access statutory funding:-

*‘This is where [West Midlands case study] were very shrewd in the fact they saw that ASR were not the big pull. I think this was in about 2004, 2006 that they needed to diversify and become something more looking at new communities, especially those from Eastern Europe changing policy around the A8s and the A2s...A lot of agencies didn’t do that and they continued to solely look at ASR, and didn’t look at new communities at all, and hence they ended’.* (Local authority, West Midlands case study)

Diversification has been argued to come with its own complexities, as more funding streams create a ‘wider variety of management tasks diverts more resources from mission-oriented efforts, and the growing number of constraints requires a delicate balance of often conflicting demands’ (Froelich, 1999: .263). The research showed the mixed portfolio of funding (Alcock et al., 1999) consisted of varying funding arrangements (grants, donations, contracts etc.), and a number of partnerships, relationships and collaborations with funders. The extract shows each funding stream came with its own

requirements and method of reporting outcomes, creating capacity issues and highlighting disadvantages for smaller organisations:-

*‘So having a very very diverse funding base is something I would advise anybody to do, but between saying it and doing it there is a lot of effort required, different requirements and different skills... At the end of the day a commissioner within a big statutory agency and a grant officer within a fairly small team of people working for a decent sized charitable trust have very different philosophies...the working practices in a charity that has a very diverse funding base needs to be very flexible. Very flexible and very stretched a lot.’* (Director, West Midlands case study)

#### **7.1.4. Seeking different avenues to generate unrestricted income**

Even before the financial crisis hit in 2007, all three case studies had sought ways of generating unrestricted income as a part of diversification, although recently this increased in emphasis:-

*‘...we can’t just be grant funded. I mean that is the death of an organisation like us, it’s why [we] are looking at a fee paying service...but it wasn’t something that came out of an epiphany that we need to be having these self-sustaining income streams. We recognized a long time ago that....it’s about diversifying those income streams, and it’s about diversifying the source of those income streams.’* (Deputy Director, London case study)

Unrestricted funding refers to income that has no attached requirements or criteria on how it should be spent. Unrestricted funds are valued by TSOs for being independent of external funders and requirements, helping to mitigate precarious funding cycles, and not

being susceptible to changes in public policy and spending priorities. One London respondent described it as *'the best funding you can get, we call them a gap filler'*, and have become increasingly valued since the shift from grants to contractual arrangements. Unrestricted funding was also seen as advantageous for subsidising activities that were viewed as unpopular to fund:-

*'... we get money for particular functions, but when we run out of money we continue to do it because there is a need and if people come and knock on the door and say 'can you help us with that'. We are not going to turn them away and say no our funding has ceased for that. Because you are dealing with a whole person and they have a whole group of different needs.'* (Adviser, London case study)

There were issues in funding services for asylum seekers, NRPF and undocumented migrants, as funders do not want to be associated with such issues or misconceptions that it is illegal (see section 6.1.3). Unrestricted funding was used to continue some additional services or subsidize gaps in administrative costs, as some respondents complained there continued to be issues around full cost recovery:-

*'...[Unrestricted revenue] is the only money that you can freely decide what to do with it. It is about how you fill in gaps, the biggest problem for me coming into [London case study] is that there is no core, it does not have enough staff working on finance and administration and they are really essential. They are the things that they don't give grants for because they are not very sexy, but actually they are crucial because without them we do not exist.'* (Former Director, London case study)

Although the three case studies share a history of diversified funding sources, they vary by the mixture of funding depending on the approach they undertook. The West Midlands example had two staff members focused on applying for small grants, often around £1000- £5000, which would usually be unrestricted funding. The organisation managed to gain £40,000 of unrestricted funding through this means that was then used to subsidise services for asylum seekers. However, as the organisation had grown resources have been focused on writing more substantial funding applications due to this process being time consuming:-

*‘....the small ones for two or three thousand it might take a couple of days to do that application which it might not be cost effective to do a smaller one ...so [Director] will say just leave it, you can’t afford to, it’s better to spend your time on the Big Lottery or something like that.’* (Fundraiser, West Midlands case study)

The South West example focused the most attention and was the most effective in accessing income from individuals. The organisation received approximately £20,000 annually in donations over the years, which at the time of the fieldwork made up 10% of its overall income. Contrary to the discussion on negative attitudes (section 6.1.3) - dissuading the public from donating to this social purpose - the South West example had access to income from individuals through networking and strong links within different faith communities. This was enabled through the Director using organisational legitimacy, credibility, and being a successful storyteller (see section 8.1.7). The other case studies placed less emphasis on generating individual income due to the perception it was resource heavy with little reward, and not having the same channels for networking in the

faith community.

#### **7.1.5. Establishing a trading arm as unrestricted income**

The London case study has been subjected to a more turbulent financial context, experiencing the competitive tendering environment, and being hit by public expenditure cutbacks. The organisation also faced a significant rise in complex cases, with 40% of its service users being either undocumented migrants or NRPF, which is higher than the other two case studies. This fuelled an incentive to generate its own income to subsidise ‘unpopular services’ and become independent from funder requirements and shifting policy, by developing its own enterprise stream. This included: the interpreting service (see section 6.2.4.); ideas of setting up an enterprise on personalisation; and during the fieldwork the organisation was developing a housing project that would sell its services to the local authorities and a social enterprise as a subsidiary to the charity. These various enterprises demonstrate the organisation’s ability to be innovative, forming inventive collaborations, but also the drive to take risks in what they believed would further its social purpose and diversify income revenue.

*‘..[ESOL] was always funding dependent. We got money from the Local Authority, that money disappeared, and we no longer do it...I think we always thought the [social enterprise] would make a contribution to [London case study] unrestricted reserves. So in 5 years’ time that whole piece of work is thriving...and making a good surplus...to make some money available to the charity.... that we would use to prop up a service that is really important but we can’t get enough funding to lever it. Or it would also come in a*

*way that would subsidise free places for people that need language support.'* (Adviser, London case study)

All three organisations adopted more efficient systems and processes (see section 7.2.1), however only the London example embraced more market-like approaches. This is not to say the others might not in the future, as an attempt to adapt to the uncertain climate, however this is clearly dependent on capacity, expertise, context and actors' interpretation. The other two case studies had refrained from taking on enterprising avenues, partially from not having the same skills and knowledge as the London example, but also having conflicting perspectives on this approach, in particular concerns on capacity and risk of mission drift (Cornforth, 2014):-

*'We have looked at a social enterprise as a possibility, but you really need to set up an arm's length organisation to make that work... then we would have to appoint someone else. We explored it and looked at different organisations that had done that, and it becomes quite apparent that your eyes are taken off the ball on what your first primary project is. And there is that thing of continuously looking back at what it is that you are here to do, you need to maintain that...But the people that are managing this can't manage this and that'.* (Director, South West)

It is unsurprising the London example embraced this development due to being established and responsive to policy developments, such as various schemes introduced for capacity building and infrastructure to develop social enterprises (Teasdale et al., 2013). The organisation was successful in setting up the social enterprise through



accessing a substantial social investment loan, from a process that was described as being similar to 'Dragons Den'. This was achieved by the external organisational legitimacy through high profile networks and operating in a business-like manner. The social enterprise fulfills the main social purpose, albeit with mission flexibility, and was developed as a subsidiary to the main body of the organisation, to prevent any overlapping of interests and minimize potential risks. A separate governing board to the charity was formed, creating a division of labour and developing a business model that differs from the other services (Cornforth, 2014). Although the organisation had taken the precaution of separating the two areas the organisation still faced tensions and challenges (Cooney, 2006), due to resources from the main body being used to set up the social enterprise and the vignette demonstrates the struggles to negotiate the new challenges in a market environment.

### **'The social enterprise'**

On entering the premises for the social enterprise, you could smell the fresh paint, and the tables and chairs still gleamed with 'newness'. It was a large open space with various clusters of computers and work spaces that looked ready to be used. What was missing was the activity from service users.

Employees from the main body had been brought to visit the social enterprise, to encourage engagement and knowledge exchange. A tour was given around the premises, followed by a presentation explaining the services. The two teams all sat around a table to discuss the opening of the enterprise. Where previously the

atmosphere had been light and welcoming, it now felt on edge with tension hanging in the air, and the social enterprise employees taking on a defensive position.

The meeting revealed the social enterprise had opened prematurely, before sufficiently scoping the market or promoting the services. The service user numbers were relatively low. With few people buying the service there was concern for the survival of the enterprise, particularly from the risks of starting a small business during a time of recession. Marketing is a key skill needed for setting up a business, however as the main body had established a strong reputation and links within the community over the last 30 years it was not an expertise that had been used before. The conclusion to the meeting was to bring in someone with the right skills and expertise to tackle the issues around marketing and selling services, even if it was on a commission basis:

*‘Over the years we have looked at,... various means of making money...and one of them is making a business out of our services. And the [social enterprise] has always struck as a good idea. But we have recognized we are not good at marketing so we need to find some organisation or an individual who is really good at getting the sale. I suppose it is the perpetual problem that the people who are drawn to doing good, being in a third sector organisation, saving the world and looking after people are not really good at selling things.’* (Director, London case study)

*Case study: London*

*Sources: Author’s fieldnotes, business plan, interviews*

The research demonstrates that in times where there is a rise in demand, fewer resources and a more competitive operating environment, innovative developments and collaborations are a key mechanism for resilience and survival. By market-like logics becoming more accessible and the actors taking on these approaches, it has opened up other avenues for the London case study to move into and think of innovative ideas to continue to adapt in the changing environment.

## **7.2. Process of organisational change**

Having considered different strategies of organisational adaptation, the discussion moves on to explore organisational change by unpacking three different areas that will illustrate the processes undertaken. Firstly, the section looks at how the case studies form a baseline of standardised structures due to external institutional pressures, mainly drawing on theoretical principles of isomorphism. This describes how practices become institutionalised from norms shared across organisations that operate in the same field, explaining the process of homogenisation that occurs across the organisations structures.

Secondly, the section shows how the organisations have developed and changed by looking at two examples, organisational culture and governance. This section uses principles from institutional logics to demonstrate the agency of actors drawing on different institutional principles that inform their behaviour and which practices to adopt. By using these theoretical principles it shows how varying institutional logics can be drawn upon, creating different organisational responses, and how this shift over time can

influence organisational change. The institutional logics discussed refer to the collective identity of members in different layers of the workforce. Through a practice of sense-making, normative and even emotional features are shared by the common identity status, which become institutionalised into logics. These institutional logics were inductively drawn out of the grounded empirical data, but are logics that have been previously portrayed within the wider literature. These include:

- Community logic
- Entrepreneurial logic
- Professional logic
- Market-based logic
- Family-like logic
- Religious logic

#### **7.2.1. Homogenising standardised procedures**

The case studies all have unique stories of how the organisation was founded and developed, differing by biographies, location, capacity, networks, and resources. These differences are reflected in the founder's story (see section 8.1.6), and are important in understanding the organisation's original position and how far the organisation has progressed. The case studies have been established for over 15 years (varying in longevity) and have expanded organically to meet the demand from service users, against a background of 'failure' from the state to provide public services for this group:-

*'The organisation started for a combination of reasons. People were arriving from the South East to this part of the West Midlands...but people arriving through asylum routes were new creatures to the Midlands.....,in the food chain you are at the very bottom...From a wider point of view there was nothing for people that were arriving in the area at the time.., and when I say nothing at all, the Council was there, CAB was there, and many other organisations would have opened their doors but these organisations had no understanding of the needs'. (Director, West Midlands case study)*

Whatever the varying starting point was, the activities of each organisation were delivered on an informal, ad-hoc basis, and resources were fairly 'hand-to-mouth', funding just a few activities and embedded within the local community. It took several years for the case studies to become formalised and constituted, through which the organisations' experience, reputation and credibility developed. Features in the wider environment influenced the direction of the service provision, but also the actors were key to interpreting the setting they were operating in and how to negotiate the organisation's position within this environment. For example, one of the shared 'taken for granted assumptions' is that the politicised nature of the service users meant the organisations had to be resourceful, therefore diversifying revenue (see section 7.1.3), building external organisational legitimacy and strategically networking (see section 8.1.1). These actions are legitimised by the wider context and reinforce organisations to adopt standardised procedures.

This research argues the organisations have moved away from being a refugee community organisation form and become established formalised TSOs due to a process of professionalisation (MacKenzie et al., 2012). In comparison to the remaining thesis that highlights the heterogeneity of the organisations, this section identifies particular institutional pressures that have influenced the organisations to undergo a process of standardised procedures and systems. Part of this professionalisation process has been due to the organisations shifting their service provision to become more efficient to respond to demand. Section 6.2.3 demonstrates the different pressures from grants and contracts that have influenced a level of normative isomorphism across the internal structures of the organisations i.e. implementing monitoring procedures, accountability, and strict requirements of reporting. Further evidence is the government introducing a legal requirement for organisations to undertake training and accreditation to deliver advice, particularly immigration advice. This encouraged a standard form of advice being delivered and influenced coercive isomorphism by having to implement guidelines and norms to deliver advice services, developing external organisational legitimacy (Suchman, 1995), and influencing professionalisation of the workforce

The introduction of quality marks has had coercive isomorphic influences on the organisations as a result of the internal systems and structures being externally assessed, and used as a tool to judge an organisation by prospective clients and external stakeholders (Karpik, 2010). Whilst the respondents reflected that adhering to quality marks created additional workload, they also stressed it reinforced organisational legitimacy and credibility as a useful process to ensure the internal structures, including

monitoring systems, had been appropriately implemented. Similar to Cairns et al. (2005) respondents claimed quality systems gave the opportunity to reflect on systems and practices, viewing it as a learning process for organisational development, which normalises the use of formalised internal structures and processes.

*'...it pushes you as an organisation to not only have those processes in place....., but to formalize them and have templates in place. It's a good kind of self-test for an organisation...do you have the processes written down, is it clearly demonstrated? If I leave can someone else do it, and that's why funders like it because it forces organisations to go through that self-critical analysis on the processes.'* (Deputy Director, London case study)

The case studies' structures have to some degree undergone institutional homogenisation, of shared structures, processes and meanings. This can partially be explained by the organisations operating in the same field and having to adopt certain ways of working and practices that have become institutionalised and influence organisational behaviour, by 'how to interpret organisational reality, what constitutes appropriate behaviour, and how to succeed' (Thornton, 2004: 70). This section argues an isomorphic baseline is formed across the organisations (Popadiuk et al., 2014) and explains organisational change up to a point, however from here the organisations have all taken on different approaches depending on agency, resources and setting.

## **7.2.2. Organisational culture**

Moving on from institutional isomorphism influencing a baseline of homogenising procedures and systems this section will delve deeper and explore everyday practices, such as, the differing approaches to organisational culture in each case study. Organisational culture is conceptualised as consisting of practice, decision-making processes, and rituals (that contribute to establishing the values and meanings). The concept of practice is important to explore as it 'refers to a set of meaningful activities that are informed by wider cultural beliefs' (Thornton et al., 2012: 128), which provides insight into the diversity of organisational responses.

### **7.2.2.1 Shifting organisational culture: the West Midlands case study**

The West Midlands is operating as an established professional organisation that is well-known and respected in the field. The internal dynamics of practice are running in a formalised and structured manner, continuously looking to improve efficiency, and reflected a professional and friendly working environment. The Director describes negotiating professionalism as 'mainstreaming' the organisation:-

*'...the organisation needs to mainstream itself...needs to have the systems in place to be as efficient as possible. Not to turn into one of those organisations that you end up having piles of paper work and you have systems in place for the sake of it. And you kind of ...lose sight of the real purpose which is helping the people in front of you. But at the same time, systems are important. Not just because when you have decent systems in*



*place people perceive you as professional, but also systems help improve efficiency in your day to day work.'* (Director, West Midlands case study)

Since it was first established with two former asylum seekers voluntarily running a telephone advice service from a garage, the organisation has consistently expanded, increasing workforce and volunteer base, and '*doing more of the same*' service provision to meet service user demand. This has been enabled by effectively diversifying its revenue, demonstrating the organisation's credibility and authenticity, and moving four times to larger and more professional work environments. This transition has informed a shift in organisation culture due to the actors drawing on different institutional logics influencing changes in the internal dynamics of practice and processes.

A key feature is the longevity of the staff, who share similar experiences and have a migrant background. This collective of individuals share similar societal positions of being marginalised in the host society, and their past experiences act as drivers for the social purpose. A process of sharing and transferring similar values between the collective individuals evidently formed a strong family-like bond between the actors. Furthermore, these individuals reflected similar principles to Aiken's (2010) notion of 'value carriers', of key individuals who maintain the organisation's values by conveying these to new staff and volunteers. Daily activities, such as, eating lunch together around the kitchen table, referring to each other as 'brother' and 'sister', and sharing stories about their different cultures, have become important rituals that actively reproduce a family-like logic. The associated meanings and values of the rituals have informed the organisational culture

to be a friendly welcoming environment. By the workforce reflecting the diverse demographics of the beneficiaries, cultural awareness, and extensive language skills, this reinforced the friendly and inclusive environment.

In the early years the organisation's internal practices and processes were performed in a more informal manner, partly due to having fewer systems, policies and procedures to follow. There was less organisational control by having a flat informal staff structure, open and transparent meetings, which meant the decision-making process typically included everyone. However, as the workforce grew more formalised employment procedures, such as staff contracts and official holiday leave, have been implemented to promote organisation efficiency. However, some respondents noted changes in the organisation's processes that seemed to conflict with previous principles, creating internal tensions. For example, team meetings had been split into separate parts (management, frontline) and performed in a more formal manner. This was presumably to increase efficiency, but one respondent felt this impacted on the openness and transparency of the organisation, or as he described being 'one unit', particularly as there was now little overlap between the separate parts:-

*'...There was no two separate teams at that time, no management team and no advisors team and we were kind of one... we used to talk to each other..... If you ask me, my personal opinion, I don't like the two meetings.... Because I feel we used to be one unit'.*  
(Adviser, West Midlands case study)

The practice of the organisation has shifted, from being performed in an informal, unstructured, client focused manner, to looking more widely at how the organisation increases its efficiency and professional appearance for external stakeholders. In response the organisation has implemented procedures for monitoring and reporting requirements, adopted a hierarchical staff structure, a large volunteer base, and introduced a ticket system to see service users. On reflection, the organisation appears to have adopted a similar model to the CAB, with the same waiting room style, formal layout, central focus and method to deliver advice services. This mimetic isomorphism of adopting more practices from a professional logic can be explained by several reasons. Firstly, the local CAB is the only equivalent organisation in local proximity, and there is overlap in various capacities, such as, referring service users, forming strong relationships, and the Director sitting on the CAB board. Secondly, the local CAB has been highly successful in the local area, supported by local authority funding, and has a well-respected Director, all of which legitimates the organisation mimicking the CAB's structures and procedures. In turn the West Midlands has been described as a 'niche CAB' - by providing immigration advice, establishing an extensive range of language skills and cultural awareness, and building a strong reputation within the local migrant community. However, tensions have developed with the CAB, by the local agency referring 'anyone with an accent' to the organisation, which has increased the demand and work pressures for the organisation, without having the same support from the local authority.

There are multiple institutional logics informing the practice of the organisations, family-like logics formed through the collection of actors sharing similar values and embedded in daily rituals, and professional logics influenced by the wider environment of institutional pressures (see section 7.2.8) and isomorphic mimicry of adopting certain systems and structures. To manage these different, and at times conflicting logics, the organisation was undertaking a process of selective coupling, which means adopting practices from each institutional logic (Pache and Santos, 2010). The actors were keen to maintain their values, reinforcing this through daily actions and transferring onto new members, which they recognized as being detrimental to the organisation's strong work ethic of hard work and commitment. On the other hand, particular professional practices are being enforced by a top down approach, with the intention of strategically positioning the organisation to compete in the environment. Generally, these practices have been accepted by the workforce, encouraging a more professional work environment, however some practices were not always negotiated within the workforce and created tensions in the organisational culture. For example, the daily ritual of eating together has been affected by the demands of workloads and members increasingly eating at their desks. Another example is the shift in management attitudes towards staff members attending Friday prayers at the local mosque:-

*'...we used to get the extra time for Friday prayers and the team was very supportive...But recently that 45 minute has been revoked. We received an email from [name] saying we should have block time the same as everyone else. There was no exceptions. I didn't like it but I accepted it. It is more like in a business way it is not like in a caring way, as it should be.'* (Adviser, West Midlands case study)

The professional logic is challenging some of the old rituals and practice, even so, the bottom level actors were accepting of this process of professionalisation, wanting to obtain better work conditions and professional identity. Furthermore, the organisational culture is not being completely dominated by the shifting logics, due to the growing staff and volunteer base continuing to be multi-cultural and diverse and reinforcing this process of 'value carriers' (Aiken, 2010). The workforce prides itself for maintaining this family-friendly environment, legitimising their practices and strong work ethic, and there was a process of negotiation between the two logics to work alongside one another (Pache and Santos, 2010). However, with the increasing pressures from the government and statutory funding pushing organisations to adopt market-like logics, there is concern market-like logics will be added to the mix to the detriment of this precarious balance.

#### **7.2.2.2. Maintained organisational culture: the South West case study**

The South West case study has demonstrated little movement to take on a more professional form, other than the baseline of standardised procedures and systems illustrated in section 7.2.1. Introductions of new systems and procedures are done in a ceremonial manner, or otherwise known as 'loose coupling' (Weick, 1976), with the habitual routines and rituals of the organisation. This meant respondents passively adopted some formal structures from institutional pressures, to give the appearance of professionalism, but the values and principles were not fully applied or embedded into the organisation's day-to-day practice (Oliver, 1991). For example, as a requirement to obtain a particular quality mark the organisation had to construct a long-term strategic plan,

however unlike the other two case studies that continually reviewed their strategic plan this organisation showed little consideration for the document. The organisation still delivers its services in a professional manner, but although the endogenous dynamics of the practice portrayed the appropriate systems and procedures implemented, these are not embedded in the organisation in the same manner as the other case studies. The workforce is resistant to take on what they thought were bureaucratic systems, which separated these institutional demands within the organisation, due to concerns resources would be redirected from the client:-

*'There is not any bureaucracy in this organisation, I have made sure to keep it as simple, as plain and transparent as well. So there is no bureaucracy here. We are here to do work for the clients, not paper work for ourselves, or create the work for ourselves, which is how to make a job for ourselves which is not worthwhile.'* (Adviser, South West case study)

The collective of individuals (board members and workforce) share religious values and interests which have created a religious logic that informs the internal dynamics of practice. For example, there is a strong focus on the clients' emotional wellbeing and being made to feel welcome in the organisation i.e. in-house counsellors have reinforced these practices. This religious logic informs the organisation to be client-focused and to operate in a modest manner, with little drive to expand. This sense-making is reinforced by wanting to focus on emotional aspects of service provision, to provide a welcoming safe environment for the service users. This is done through the commitment of well-meaning volunteers providing a hosting role rather than delivering advice. It also means

the space and practice is informal, unstructured, and often referred to as 'chaotic', with the staff and volunteers often reflecting feelings of pride to have resisted transforming into a professional, business-like organisation. For example, there are few formal staff meetings which means no formal decision-making process, other than at board meetings. The actors adopted certain ways of behaviour that have become ritualistic in the sense they inform and reproduce this chaotic organisational culture:-

*'We have had waves of doing team meetings on a Tuesday....we will be in the office and the counsellors will come in and ask a question, the phone will ring, [name] would not have arrived yet, [name] will probably go out and have her lunch. A client will come in with an emergency situation, and someone has got an appointment in the diary because they forgot there was a meeting, and then someone is off sick. So it's like, is it worth the bother?'* (Adviser, South West case study)

Instead, the organisation's decision-making is done through continually conversing with one another throughout the day, often chatting over their work desks, which creates a strong communicative work dynamic. This works due to the nature of the organisation: small size, flat staff structure, confined working space, longevity and relationships formed between the actors and sharing principles from the religious logic. These collective rituals, of not following a formalised professional norm, have enabled the organisation to resist the pressures from the wider environment. This is reinforced by the organisation operating in a sheltered environment and surviving by building organisational authenticity and external legitimacy (see section 8.1.3 on networking).

### 7.2.2.3. Transient organisational culture: the London case study

The London case study has undergone a considerable transition, partly due to its longevity and heightened turbulent contextual environment, and the shifting collective of individuals. Initially, the organisation had the security of a substantial amount of funding, the Director having ultimate autonomy, and driven to provide a space for community groups to gather and engage within. Often this would be culturally specific, such as, teaching traditional music and was described as creating a vibrant environment that was buzzing with activities. The focus was more on lobbying and campaigning for issues on social justice:-

*'We were never chaotic, we always had a clear idea on what we were doing. But in the early days we were not seeing ourselves as a service provider but we were seeing ourselves as a stimulator of social action, and not necessarily social action we were doing ourselves. But we were enabling people that were engaged in it with a particular kind of value base.'* (Former Director, London case study)

The organisation became embedded within a diverse range of communities that accessed the building, influencing the practice to operate in an informal, collective and welcoming manner. The organisation had the opportunity to expand due to being based in spacious premises, and started to apply for various grants to deliver community projects, which led to the recruitment of staff and volunteers reflecting these diverse community groups. The strong involvement of service users and the purpose of the organisation meant practices were adopted from a community logic, which was driven by the needs of the service users. These values, interests and beliefs of a community logic were also reproduced and



maintained by the Director adopting the theory of change model (see section 8.1.8. describing the underpinnings of the organisation's strategic development), which views the service user as the central point of organisational change.

For many years the community logic was the dominating institutional logic that informed the practice of the organisation. This shifted as the organisation increasingly operated in a more professional-market driven environment. This was partially a result of the Director's innovative, and somewhat risk-taking, approach to diversifying service provision and revenue, and forming innovative collaborations. Collaborations were developed across sectors and policy fields, such as, Probation services, the Work Programme, and have been instrumental to the organisation adopting different processes and systems. Professional logics have been drawn upon from various fields, and subsequently developed signs of hybridisation. This example has delivered large contracts, set up enterprises, sold services (see section 7.1.4), and shifted the dynamics of governance to meet these new demands (see section 7.2.9), fundamental in explaining organisational change. The expanding workforce and a shift towards recruiting professionals, with previous experience in various professions and market knowledge, has created a further diverse mix of individuals, and introduced such values and interests to the organisation's practice.

Coupled with the earlier example of the organisation launching a social enterprise (section 7.1.4), this illustrates the organisation adopting new market-like logics to inform organisational practice. Commentators describe the tensions within social enterprises

that can be created between the social mission and the commercial goals (Cornforth, 2014; Cooney, 2006). However this research found that by forming a subsidiary trading arm, and positioning the social enterprise as a separate identity to the charity i.e. resources, labour etc., the organisation avoided mission drift. Nevertheless, it was evident that market-like logics were increasingly being referred to from these enterprising experiences, adding to the mixture of institutional logics being drawn upon.

By the case study straddling different policy fields from collaborations and enterprises, the case study shows evidence of a complex mix of different institutional logics, including community logic, professional logic and market-like logics, creating challenges of 'institutional complexity' (Greenwood et al., 2010). Like in the West Midlands, some of the actors were selecting particular practices to influence organisational behavior, some coexisted with one another, whereas others were evidently competing. However, due to the number of institutional logics the organisation was drawing upon, the case study showed signs of being a 'blended hybrid' (Skelcher and Smith, 2015), varying logics informing different parts of the organisation each with its own processes and practices (Pache and Santos, 2010). Skelcher and Smith (2015) claim this often happens in contexts that are turbulent, as it 'offer[s] space for creative and innovative responses by organisations, drawing on different aspects of plural institutional logics' (p.445). Signs pointed to the organisation moving away from an informal organisational culture drawing on a community logic, to a more formal environment, or as one respondent described as 'becoming slicker'. The vignette below illustrates these themes of the

organisation adopting professional and market-like practices to operate in the increasingly challenging environment (Sacranie, 2012).

**'You could hear a pin drop'**

When entering the staff office at the beginning of the day, it started as it usually does, with staff and volunteers staring at their computer screens with pure determination, barely lifting their heads to greet others. During the day, and throughout the three months, I noted how quiet the office space was. The silence only broken when the phone rang, or a volunteer asks for advice about a service user's case. It was described that on some days *'you could hear a pin drop'*.

To access the staff office you had to climb three flights of stairs, and a code was required to open the door. This was a clear sign only authorized individuals were allowed, and there was a designated space for the service users in the hall downstairs. When entering the office it opened up into a large space filled with office desks and computers, some were hot desks for the volunteers, and the rest were divided up by different streams of services. Conversations shared across the room are formal, about case work and to the point. Little informal chat happens, as lunch is eaten at their desks, and on rare occasions staff and volunteers are observed catching up over coffee in the kitchen. Typically teas and coffees are made for a one-to-one or team meeting, which is where the majority of conversing takes place. This creates a formal and professional work environment, however it felt loaded with tension and the weight of the caseloads was felt in the air.

I reflected whether this was a response to my presence as a researcher, being cautious of saying something that could appear unprofessional. However, over the weeks I was

told how the environment had changed over the years, where once it had been a hub of activity and buzzing with atmosphere, energy was now taken up by the high demands and stressful workloads. Recently, there had been phases of high staff turn-over, and at that time two key staff members were leaving. During a development day these thoughts were confirmed by several staff addressing how the combination of factors was creating low morale in the work environment; right now I was the least of their worries

*Case study: London*

*Sources: Author's fieldnotes*

What is noticeable from this vignette was the current low organisation morale. The findings show the organisation had become increasingly fragmented over the years, to name just a few features, by having no collective of individuals with a dominant logic; the complex staff matrix system that seemed to be continuously reviewed; the separate streams of services with limited overlap; and the different funding sources associated with various requirements and ideologies. There was a professional formal organisational culture that had few collective rituals in place, partly due to the organisation continuously shifting and adapting to the environment and not being able to maintain rituals, but also a result of lack of opportunities to develop rituals other than in formal settings, such as, in staff development days and meetings. Other mundane examples of tensions created by shifting logics, included when a member from the social enterprise attended a community group forum discussing the struggles and challenges finding resources for the group's survival. When the social enterprise member described the purpose of the enterprise, and

that service users would have to pay for the services, feelings of tension were raised in the meeting. Some community members became overtly critical of this new direction. This demonstrates the challenges of conflicting logics, how it may appear attractive to some external stakeholders, but could also be detrimental in tampering with the organisation's community reputation and trust.

### **7.2.3. Governing board**

This section moves on to focus on a different layer of the organisation- the governing board. Rather than looking at the roles and responsibilities of boards (already extensively covered in the literature), the section will explore the different dynamics within the boards that explain heterogeneity across the organisations. The board provide essential resources, connections and legitimacy to the organisations, in line with the principles of the resource dependency theory (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). However, the resource dependency theory only provides part of the explanation, therefore the institutional logics theory will be applied to demonstrate that the collective of board members informs a governing logic, which varies by the individuals that constitute the board. This section will demonstrate how governing logics are useful to understand the dynamics of the decision-making processes within an organisation. It will illustrate how governing logics can either reproduce or contest internal practices, or in the case of drawing on multiple institutional logics these can be negotiated, but still create internal conflict in the work place.

### 7.2.3.1. Professional logics: the West Midlands case study

Once the West Midlands case study had taken on an independent form through seeking funding sources and moving premises, a committee was constructed to provide organisational governance. Initially, this consisted of two board members from an academic background, with professional expertise and knowledge, and who had extensive contacts with local agencies and politicians. The Chair had previous experience from the local CAB, and a background in law that was beneficial in the organisation becoming constituted. The other trustee was a retired academic who specialised in business management, and has been influential in shaping the structural development of the organisation i.e. implementing formal procedures, meetings, staff structure. The two members have remained in these roles and developed a strong relationship, both professional and personally, with the Director over the last ten years, referred to '*as the core in the board that have been there virtually... from the beginning*', which is built on trust, reliance and consistency. This relationship, or '*the core*', is where the main strategizing is undertaken and plays an influential role within board dynamics:-

*'And personally we have been very lucky with the kind of people we have had through our board over the years. Also we have been very lucky that there has been consistency, many of the people, two of the people that were there 11 years when we incorporated are still there.'* (Director, West Midlands case study)

The stability was reinforced by the recruitment process of new board members. The Chair described the process as cautiously selecting members thought to be like-minded and obtaining expertise to produce a balanced board of skills and knowledge. Previous

experience revealed the challenges of recruiting representatives with varied priorities and ideologies, which the Chair claimed was detrimental to an organisation existing in a field already fraught with complexities:-

*'It is entirely undemocratic, but it is the way the organisation has managed to prosper...and because of its fairly controversial nature in terms of its subject matter and clients, we didn't want to make it possible for people to become members and disrupt it...I think it is a good thing because it's a group of enthusiasts that have got experience on what they are doing and should be running these sorts of things, rather than nut bags with agendas that come along with barmy ideas that they want to force upon other people, I have had enough of that in the past.'* (Chair, West Midlands case study)

Members were sought through exclusive channels, and resulted in the board perpetuating similar characteristics - white, middle class, retired, with specialised expertise. McPherson et al. (2001) refer to this process of selection as 'status homophily', or described as 'birds of a feather flock together'. The empirical evidence demonstrates the similar socio-demographic characteristics of the board members and illustrates the localised nature of the governing board's networking. This has maintained the power dynamic of 'the core' by recruiting members through their social networks, and not having to renegotiate these positions. By the member sharing a similar culture they draw upon an institutional framework, in this case a professional logic, that is used to make sense of the wider environment and inform decision-making (Thornton et al., 2012). This collective action has formed a dominant logic, with actors working towards a common goal, functioning in a professional and efficient manner. This has prevented any drastic conflicts

of interests over the years. On the other hand this lack of diversification has meant limited community representation on the board (Rossi et al., 2015), although it could be argued this has been managed by the workforce being heavily reflective of the community (see section 7.2.3).

The organisation has undergone a process of professionalisation, moving away from an informal community-based entity that has run on a family-like environment (see section 7.2.3). By successfully accessing various sources of revenue the organisation has adapted to managing resources, a growing workforce, and increasing requirements from various stakeholders. The board has increasingly referred to their knowledge of professional systems and procedures, which due to the various members is an extensive availability of professional knowledge, such systems have been applied to expand the organisation where thought appropriate.

This professional logic has increasingly become the dominant logic of the organisation, substituting the previous family-like logic, due to coercive pressures from the wider environment. For example, the organisation's funding regime has acted as a shield from austerity measures, however the Director acknowledged that to access larger contracts, particularly statutory revenue, the organisation needs to operate in a professional manner. This push for professionalisation encouraged the decision to audit the organisation to review the staff roles and workforce structure. This created tension between the Director and the workforce. Some staff members felt they had not been included in the decision for the audit, and were unappreciated for their front-line work in



the highly pressurized environment. The staff were viewed as too reliant on the Director who was under considerable stress. To tackle this the board used the professional logic as a reference and introduced certain methods, such as quality circles, from business management, to manage dynamics within the organisation, and enforced professional logics and practices within the organisation.

#### **7.2.3.2. Religious logics: the South West case study**

The South West case study also demonstrated the importance of longevity by the current Chair and one other trustee member being involved in the development of the organisation and still remaining in these roles. Similar to the West Midlands, the recruitment process for board members has been fairly informal and through the social networks of existing members for particular skills and like-mindedness, which has meant few conflicts within the board. The board mainly consists of white, middle class and often retired members, as well as, a strong religious presence described as contributing to the 'compassionate' aspect of the board. This self-selecting process means 'there is a danger the board may become self-serving or subject to group-think' (Cornforth and Spear, 2010: 7). In this case the organisation shows it has maintained its client focus by the drive of religious logic and by a service user representative on the board.

This organisation was based on a philanthropic model, which fundamentally stemmed from the workforce sharing principles from a religious social order. A dominant religious logic meant the members were highly value-driven, motivated by client-need, and wanting

to operate in a modest fashion. The South West example was concerned with maintaining the service provision, reproducing norms and beliefs, with no motivation for expansion. Instead, there are examples of resistance to the wider environment, wanting to maintain its core focus, such as concerns that competing for tenders or larger pots of funding would shift the dynamics of the organisation. The focus has been on maintaining community networks and donations, which has been essential for the organisation's survival but also limiting resources to be used for organisational change. Compared with the other case studies more formalised board meetings, the Director assigned part of the agenda to share current service user stories and experiences. Using such narratives created an emotionally charged environment when discussing other organisational issues (see section 8.1.7), and reinforced the decision-making process to remain inward looking and client-focused. Rationales for not adopting competing professional logics, included firstly, collectively sharing the same religious logics, and not wanting to be weighed down by bureaucratic systems, and secondly, the board being fearful of changing the nature of the organisation.

The organisation operated in a fairly sheltered environment, with a stable funding regime, which may also explain the limited drive to adopt market-driven or professional logics, such as, expansion, improving work conditions or even raising salaries. For example, the board actively reinforced the organisation having a flat staff structure, and introduced informal support processes (see section 8.3.1). Although the work environment was described as chaotic, noisy and informal, the board did not renegotiate the work environment or enforce professional systems and procedures like the West Midlands

example. This was because the board drew on different logics and also the Chair not wanting to intervene with this environment due to being heavily client-focused:-

*‘...the staff, I think they are very professional and I think they are very good at what they do...I mean the way they work is chaotic. But it works you know. And the last thing I would want to do is say this, that and the other. I mean it took us nearly a year to fill in paper work... Have you ever read a book called a ‘Fine Balance’ by Rotini? It’s about an Indian society and these people will turn up at this boarder house and live in it, all sorts of odd people and it works, it is a fine balance, and they support each other and if one leaves it all falls over. It is like that here, it is a fine balance.’* (Chair, South West case study)

#### **7.2.3.3. Multiple logics: the London case study**

The South West and West Midlands case studies have a history of stability within the board through the longevity of members, and generally conformed to one dominant institutional logic. The accounts illustrate a continuous equal partnership between the board and Director due to following a similar logic. In comparison, the London case study has undergone various stages of reshuffling the board composition, to recruiting members with specific skills and expertise to respond to the wider environment. On the one hand evidence demonstrates the accomplishments of this reshuffling, but it has also meant a renegotiation of power dynamics, shifting organisational direction and conflicting internal tensions.

In the early years the Director had primary autonomy with a main purpose to provide a space of solidarity to new community groups. To meet this objective a committee was formed of community members to represent the needs and voices of the diverse range of community groups it was supporting. This contrasts with the other case studies on the emphasis placed on diversification and heavy involvement of community members, which has '*naturally had an influence on the shape of the organisation*' by being the dominating community logic. Over the years the wider environment and service user needs have shifted and become more complex, which meant service provision focused on tackling these issues and not only supporting the community groups (see section 7.1.5). The Director's outward looking and progressive perspective to respond to the wider environment resulted in him making a strategic decision to professionalise the board. This involved recruiting board members with a diverse range of knowledge and skills to navigate this challenging environment, which was accelerated by the Director's forthcoming retirement:-

*'...we have done all the stuff around getting us more effective and more efficient. I think one of the big things was looking at governance a few years ago, that was a huge thing. In the original thing it was a collective of these little groups, and you just hadn't got the dispassionate view from the board so in shifting that we recruited some really good people.'* (Former Director, London case study)

A key requirement during this process was recruiting a Chair who not only had expertise in governance, but was also willing to question the Director and bring in new approaches. In 2006, a Chair was recruited who had experience with more established, larger

organisations, implementing formalized systems and procedures, but also brought in a more equal power dynamic in the board-Director relationship (Cornforth and Macmillan, 2016):-

*'...we decided we needed to move from having a kind of chair who is a community development worker, to a chair who is really experienced in governance. Because we couldn't afford as the organisation we had become, with 20 staff members, to have a governing body that is so flimsy and unreliable, we are dealing with really big things here. And so [name] strengthened us on that area, she was really sharp and clear... she had been through the system... but also was good at being that sounding board for the chief executive...He needed someone who could stand up to him in a positive way... Because having people around that differ to you because you know more is not healthy'.* (Trustee, London case study)

The extract demonstrates a shift in practices away from a community development approach, or individuals that had a direct interest in the community groups' needs, to members that were recruited for their expertise and drawing more on a professional logic. To find this balance of skills and expertise that reflected the requirements of the wider environment, meant the board underwent several stages of reshuffling:-

*'We kept changing the constitution to keep finding the perfect contribution, it is never perfect because... the external environment changes and we think we have got it perfect and then there is an election.'* (Trustee, London case study)

The development of the social enterprise also meant constructing a separate governing board as a legal requirement, to separate the resources and objectives, and to minimize any risk to the charity. The overall governance of the organisation created a more complex system (Cornforth, 2010), but also influenced the charity to adopt more market-like logics in the decision-making process:-

*'There is this thing in charities, that they think bringing people in from the private sector that they don't have values or integrity, but that is nonsense...Actually what you will get is that people work in other areas in life but give their time as volunteers to being on your board, or being semi-retired and got time, or have changed jobs. Coming from finance in the private sector is classic, people wanting to work for an organisation driven by values and feel their work is not just about making money. Although we do want them to come to [London case study] and make money for us.'* (Former Director, London case study)

This is advantageous in building the external legitimacy by being associated with high profile professionals, and access to a wide networking pool, which is beneficial for the organisation's resilience and survival. For example, appointing the current Chair, a former immigration minister (viewed by some staff members as controversial), was an important move to navigate the increasingly hostile political environment towards immigration and tap into networks:-

*'We went through another process, and said look the political environment is getting tougher and tougher all the time, you need somebody who can operate at that level and we looked around for various options and we settled on [Chair]. And she was really good,*

*because she has a little black book. She says oh yeah there is [name] and [name] turns out to be in the lords. She is amazing!’* (Trustee, London case study)

Only one long-standing board member remains, viewed as an essential asset due to her ‘historical memory’. She found that she often has to act as the community representative in this mixed board:-

*‘...when the board were talking about what the community forum does, ‘it is talking about the same things every time’. And I wanted to say yes of course it keeps talking about the same things all the time, it still needs to do that. So I feel in some sense I have become the guardian of community development amongst all these people that are very high powered and use acronyms, like I don’t know what they are talking about but actually the community groups have a way of being that’s really important.’* (Trustee, London case study)

This illustrates an example of ‘value carriers’ (Aiken, 2010) by this trustee maintaining the community logic, which can be lost as members are replaced with those drawing on different logics. It also demonstrates how the changing board composition can affect the environment of the board meetings, by the majority of the trustees coming from highly professional backgrounds creating a formalized environment through the procedures and professional language used. This had a knock-on effect by creating an intimidating environment for community member representatives, and acting as a barrier for them to fully participate in the board meetings.

This new mix of governance brought other controversial challenges to the direction of the organisation. The workforce is evidently dedicated to the social purpose, however the board drawing on different institutional logics has generated conflicting views with the staff members. For example, the staff demonstrated strong views towards working with certain large private organisations (see section 6.2.6) that are allegedly linked to negative behaviour in running detention centres:-

*'What I have realized by talking to the board...about what I do, is that... the view of the work is different. So I was presenting the risks of working with people like Serco as potential partners, and [the Chairs] view of the risks were more along the lines if they messed up the contract that could reflect badly on us, not these are bad people doing bad things we don't want to work with them. That was more of her view as a politician, she has been working with these organisations for a long time. She might not share my view of them as pure evil I don't know, it's hard to say.'* (Adviser, London case study)

Despite the rising tensions from the workforce, the board took the decision to deliver a service in partnership with G4S, justified by different institutional logics within the board. This created conflict with the values and ethos of the workforce. Where previously there had been transparent working relationships with the board, these top-down decisions were beginning to create internal tensions. It is evident that market-driven logics have been interpreted differently by the respondents, depending on where the individuals are placed. Clearly those undertaking the day-to-day operations and contact with service users, are more client focused and value based. Those on the governing board also have strong values, hence their voluntary role as trustees, however the variation in the



members' roles external to the organisation also bring with them competing logics i.e. political, market-driven. Greenwood et al's (2011) investigation of the complexities of how organisations respond to multiple institutional logics describes the outcome invariably favouring the institutional logics of individuals with the most powerful position. In this example, the board holds a more powerful position to the workforce, which has not only swayed this decision-making process but could ultimately shape the overall direction of the organisation:-

*'So yeah she [the Chair] has definitely got a different view, and she can definitely be more politically sensitive...one of the things she wanted reassurance on was about are we helping people that should be deported....Am I supposed to decide that? Should I sit down and say I think you should be deported and therefore I don't work with you?...I think it is a hard habit for a politician to lose, how do you suddenly think actually I don't need to worry about what the public think if it comes to light.'* (Adviser, London case study)

Overall, the London case study has responded to the issues and challenges in the wider environment, by restructuring its services and strategically diversifying the board of multiple stakeholders that are highly-skilled and fully functional to respond to any emerging external issues. This has been advantageous in placing the organisation into a stronger position to navigate the environment, and successfully maintained the survival of the organisation in these challenging times. As the organisation has undertaken new funding relationships, selling services and forming new trading partnerships, the new mix of governance has introduced new practices and procedures to meet the changing requirements and is another demonstration of hybridity (Cornforth and Spear, 2010).

However, this is not without a price. Constantly reshuffling the diversification of the board members has meant there are no long-term established relationships built on trust and consistency. Instead, relationships are based on professionalism and formal processes, which presumably has been beneficial in the organisation developing skills to manage expectations and requirements in the wider environment. However, this diversification and inconsistency has brought with it fragmentation across the organisation, where multiple logics have to be negotiated, and in some examples, renegotiated, which is subsequently creating internal tensions. Furthermore, power dynamics are associated with these multiple institutional logics, and prevent an inclusive space for community members to engage within.

### **7.3. Summary**

Whereas Chapter Six illustrated how the wider context can be experienced in various ways, this chapter argued that experiences can be interpreted in numerous ways, which then influence different organisational responses. The case studies have demonstrated that challenges should not always be perceived negatively, but can also inspire organisations to be open to new opportunities and ways of working, not only for organisational development but also as a means of survival. Contrary to widespread belief that TSOs stray from their missions when chasing resources, a more positive perspective has been applied through the notion of 'mission flexibility' - by having room for interpretation and to take on different approaches, by focus, service provision, and flexibility to develop innovative solutions to rising and changing needs. However, the chapter argued this process needs to be managed by strong governance and a focused

value-driven workforce to ensure the organisation does not stray from its purpose.

This notion of mission flexibility works well with the earlier reference to funding diversification, by not chasing any funding to continue operation, but casting a wider and more open perspective over different opportunities to obtain revenue; in particular, by developing varying ways to generate unrestricted revenue that can subsidise service users viewed as the most 'undeserving'. However, the chapter argued this comes with complications, due to being heavily resource and capacity dependent to meet the varying requirements, which creates disadvantages for smaller organisations.

The chapter also stressed that organisations have shifted service provision in response to external pressures, as well as changing client need. Contrary to literature that focuses on organisations being pushed into public service delivery through commissioning and taking on statutory contracts, these organisations are delivering public services, with little or no statutory funding. Instead, they subsidise these services through different revenue, mainly from the Big Lottery Fund or other charitable trusts. This shift in service delivery, away from community development work, integration, and wellbeing, to providing advice and advocacy as its core function is a result of changes in policy. Welfare reform, cutbacks to legal aid and hostile immigration legislation have not only created more demand for services but case work has become more complex and time consuming. Coupled with a squeeze on both statutory and third sector agencies, this has meant mounting pressure on these organisations to meet this demand, and having to refocus resources at the expense of dropping other services.

The second half of the chapter argued organisations should not be viewed as single entities, but consist of multiple layers formed of processes that follow different schemas, adding to the complexity of understanding organisational change. The chapter discussed different layers, such as, standardised structures, organisational culture and governing logics, which demonstrate examples of how change within an organisation can occur in different ways. Whilst Chapter Eight unpacks the 'black box' of how actors are involved in this process, this chapter has argued that the institutional logics actors draw upon are fundamental in understanding organisational agency. This chapter argues organisations that operate in the same policy field, share similar exogenous pressures that have institutionalized ways of behaving, and influenced the homogenization of the structural processes, systems and practices. These different normative isomorphic pressures have encouraged the organisations to operate in a more efficient and formalised manner to appear professional and build external organisational legitimacy.

Following this baseline of homogenised structures the organisations have, however, demonstrated adopting varying degrees of hybridity and heterogeneity in their organisational form. This is dependent on space, nature and the context within which each case study is situated, and also the different institutional logics actors draw upon to shape organisational behaviour. In brief:

- South West case study: since being established it has continued to have a dominating religious logic, which is echoed and reinforced in the different layers of the organisation. Although institutional pressures, from statutory funding,

quality marks, training etc, have meant the organisation has been required to appear to have homogenised structures this has been loosely coupled. This means structures have been ceremoniously implemented for the external appearance, rather than the principles being formally followed. The organisation has resisted adopting more practices from a professional logic, due to the professional logic conflicting with the dominating religious logic. Consequentially, this has maintained the current institutional way of working.

- West Midlands case study: the organisation originally stemmed from a dominating family-like logic, through recruiting members with similar migrant backgrounds and assimilating a family-like environment. The formation of the board was driven by professional logics, which meant the organisation accepted the baseline of homogenised structural changes. The two dominating logics successfully co-existed with one another over the years, allowing organisational agency to draw on different parts of the logics that suit the different layers of the organisation. The family-like logic continued through embedded rituals and practices that maintain these values and beliefs. However, the Director has increasingly shifted from a family-like logic to a professional logic due to mimicry of the local CAB, and wanting to appear externally professional. Processes have disrupted the balance of logics within the organisation, creating internal tensions.
- London case study: the organisation was formed with a dominating community logic. There has been a shift in logics amongst the different organisational layers.

The organisation is driven to enhance its role in service delivery, diversifying its service streams through collaborations, as a result of its innovative Director and operating in a competitive market environment. In response to the rising demands the organisation has diversified its staff and board from different logics. There has been a shift to drawing on multiple institutional logics within the organisational culture and the governing board, that has created numerous processes within the organisation, some of which are contrasting. Previously, different logics co-existed by operating at different levels, however a blurring of boundaries, and an increasing emphasis on drawing on market-like logics, has created friction and tension among the workforce. There is concern that heightened conflicting logics could fragment the organisation even further.

These three trajectories demonstrate how organisational change, such as, professionalisation and hybridisation, is not static but is a dynamic and fluid process (Mullins and Acheson, 2014). This chapter argues that organisations have the ability to conform to exogenous pressures, justified by building the organisations external legitimacy and credibility, whilst also demonstrating organisational agency by the diversity in organisational response. The process of change varies in each organisational setting depending on the organisation's agency, differing by layer, and how these layers interact. The following chapter will delve even further to illuminate the actions of actors within these processes.

## CHAPTER EIGHT: BRINGING BACK ACTORS AND AGENCY INTO THE ANALYSIS ON ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

### 8. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to unravel organisational change through answering the research question '*what dynamics within organisations are influential on organisational processes?*' by 'looking inside' an organisation to unpack the 'black box' of organisational change. As section 3.4. describes, the concept dynamic is a synonym for processes, relationships, values and beliefs, with a particular emphasis on bringing the role of actors and agency to the fore (Acheson, 2014). Discussion will be on the complex systems and compartments that construct organisations, which are informed and shaped by values and beliefs that are essential in understanding the internal dynamics. This chapter will further explain the heterogeneity of organisational form and response to the contextual environment, demonstrating organisations are not static entities but rather it is the fluid and dynamic feature of organisations that produce organisational change.

As this chapter is exploring in-depth organisational behaviour at the individual-level, it will draw more on fieldnotes and ethnographic conversations, which highlight the everyday and mundane practices within the organisations. The empirical data illustrates the daily environment, dynamics and mechanisms, and also the challenges, tensions and uncertainty that may arise. The concept of institutional work will be drawn upon from the analytical framework (see section 4.3.) to explain how human agency influences existing institutions and institutional processes. In comparison to Chapter Seven outlining the

different institutional pressures and how these form constraints on organisational behaviour, this chapter will focus on how the actions of actors are influential in institutional change (Battilana and D'Aunno, 2009), rather than perceiving actors as passively adopting practices and conforming to expectations of institutional logics. Instead, this chapter will explore the agency of actors drawing on different institutional logics, and the active engagement in processes, practices, discourse, and reflexivity (Battilana and D'Aunno, 2009). Principles of emotion work (Moisander et al., 2016) will be drawn upon to illuminate the role of values and emotions to understand the underpinnings of institutional work, and unpack the deepest bottom layer within the organisational setting.

The approach the chapter takes to exploring the micro-level analysis, is first by looking at the role of key actors from the power of leadership, and secondly looking at the strength of collective processes. The first section is concentrating on how strategies of leadership are played out through different types of institutional work- networking and narratives. The discussion in the former unpacks the different approaches taken to networking, the rationale, and how this has shaped varying internal dynamics with other individuals. The discussion of narratives looks at discourse, highlighting the relevance of founder stories in keeping organisations' history and values alive, and other forms of narrative that shape individual actions. The second section looks at themes around collective processes by describing the changing work conditions, increasing work intensification, emotional demand and job insecurity. This is followed by unravelling how these pressures and challenges are managed by individuals collectively sharing values and emotions towards



the social purpose and organisation, which is demonstrated as an essential mechanism to support strong work commitment and keep organisational morale high.

## **8.1. Leadership practices**

The Directors from all three case studies have different leadership practices within the organisations. None of the Directors had worked in similar roles previously, but established themselves as powerful leaders. Narratives such as ‘visionary’, ‘charismatic’, and ‘aura’ were used to describe the Directors by both internal and external respondents. The term ‘charismatic’ was a common feature explaining the success of the Directors’ leadership role, specifically portrayed as the ‘face’ of the organisation. This echoes findings from an earlier study of infrastructure TSOs (Macmillan, 2007), where the perceived calibre and approach of Chief Executives as seen by external stakeholders became a proxy in how the organisation was then perceived. Their various descriptors act as mechanisms to differentiate the leaders and enhance their integrity with both internal and external stakeholders to maintain their power position (Kraatz, 2009). The following sections illustrate the daily practices and narratives undertaken by the Directors as forms of institutional work, which reproduce or challenge existing social orders or norms of behaviour, or otherwise referred to as institutions.

### **8.1.1. Relevance of networking**

Echoing previous research on leadership a common characteristic shared across the Directors was emphasis on networking and building relationships with high profile

individuals (Chambers and Edwards-Stuart, 2007; Cormack and Stanton, 2003; Peck et al., 2009). This was heightened by the Directors' awareness of the politicised nature of the group and fiscal concerns, and motivation strategically to build supportive bridges. The intention is to access resources and capital to maintain the organisations' operation, demonstrating principles from the resource dependency theory (Pfeffer and Salenick, 1978). Networking became a fundamental component of the Director job role attending forums, meetings, and 'chasing' potential opportunities. The Directors approach different external stakeholders and agencies by drawing on a range of stories and selling points, in the attempt to gain support for the organisation:-

*'You need to know when different types of meetings require different types of information. So as much as you might want to bring up one person's concern to a multi-agency forum, it might not be the right place, the subject might be the right place but not the right person.'*  
(Director, South West case study)

Kraatz (2009) describes this process of institutional work as 'legitimacy seeking behaviour', and adopting a networking practice of delivering multiple approaches to multiple stakeholders. Successful leaders are aware of the different approaches required and are skillful at implementing them whilst still maintaining their integrity. Part of this ability to maintain integrity is having a broad knowledge of the changing environment, balanced with an up-to-date grounded knowledge of the day-to-day issues and needs for service users further emphasizing organisational legitimacy and credibility. The dedication towards both is illustrated through the commitment to sustaining the service

delivery. The success is demonstrated through the external respondents' perception of the Directors as trustworthy and reputable.

### **8.1.2. Wide networking approach**

Out of the three case studies the West Midlands Director (who will be referred to from now on as 'Abner' – a pseudonym) placed the most effort into networking and building relationships across a broad range of stakeholders. Initially, Abner had been a former asylum seeker founding the organisation, working as a senior advice worker, and became well-known within the service user community. His social position at the time was key to his commitment to the social purpose, due to having a strong value base from his own personal experience and grounded expertise from working with service users (Cormack and Stanton, 2003). Abner did not know the 'rules of the game' of the competitive funding environment or how to negotiate a strong bargaining position (MacKenzie et al., 2012). To understand this process he recruited a highly professional board, well connected within the locality, building organisational legitimacy and enhancing his own social capital through developing strong relationships with key trustees (described in section 7.2.9). From Abner's experiences of working with professional board dynamics and forming strong ties with the local CAB, he shifted from drawing primarily on a community logic to a professional logic that became the normalized practice of institutional work.

As the organisation became more established the strategic development part of the Director's role took on more prominence, by attending more local meetings and

networking to establish the organisation. By progressing onto regional, national and on occasion international forums and events, this has meant his social position has shifted to become well-known and respected across different professional networks. Abner's intention was to demonstrate the professionalism of the organisation, influenced by his charismatic character, which built beneficial support networks to access various resources and the organisation's reputation to compete against other agencies. These actions shifted Abner's social position to become a high profile professional but also disrupted the institutional logics within the organisation, by restructuring its structures and culture, and pushing the organisation to become a more established and professional organisation. The practice of networking and disrupting the institutions to become professionalised was legitimized by reward e.g. accessing resources, finding champions for the organisation.

Abner demonstrated agency in his networking approach by deliberately adopting a wider gaze to possible networking opportunities, across other policy fields. The board justified the wide approach as a strong marketing strategy to outsource varying and different possible revenue. It was also key to access a range of events, to build the external legitimacy not only for his own personal development but also that of the organisation. He not only tried to cover a broad target audience but also made it part of his long-term strategy rather than just for immediate reward.

*'... it's not only networking with groups I think he [the Director] also likes to cultivate relationships with individuals that would be useful. Not only with organisations but with*

*actual precise individuals, he knows who they are and he knows that in three or four years' time they will be useful to us.'* (Fundraiser, West Midlands case study)

A further explanation to casting a wide net, rather than a narrow approach to develop more intense relationships, was due to the lack of financial support given by the local authority and the need to diversify income revenue to avoid dependency on one funding source (see section 6.3). The organisation overlaps with the local authority in several ways, although often does not receive any financial benefits from these arrangements. Nonetheless, Abner deemed it essential to build trust and a positive reputation with the local authority, particularly with the current conflicting views over migration. Instead, the Director purposely maintains institutional links with the intention of promoting future relationships and potential funding opportunities. As Kraatz (2009) describes *'using trust and cooperation seems considerably more important in pluralistic institutional contexts, where taken for granted belief and values are not widely shared'* (p.77).

The Director has adapted to the demands from the external pressures (Kraatz, 2009) by shifting the balance between visible presence within the organisation and networking externally. He described his commitment to the organisation by *'thinking pretty much 24/7 about the direction of the organisation'*, which other respondents reflected was *'a very lonely job'*. Networking involved substantial demands, such as, considerable time spent out of the building and limited capacity to attend team meetings, which created a heightened sense of 'leadership presence' when in the building. Concerns were raised

on his primary role in networking, claiming *'the reputation of the organisation rests a bit on [Abner's] shoulders'* with respondents stating they wanted a more active networking role (Macmillan, 2007). Nevertheless, the organisation has clearly survived and managed to expand in a time of turbulence, partially due to the Director's commitment, strategic approach to networking and dominating, charismatic figure-head role, all of which contribute to maintaining normative institutions. However, as the organisation has grown in size the Director has not matched this by delegating out responsibilities or networking roles, which could place the organisation in a vulnerable position and create internal tensions.

### **8.1.3. Narrow networking approach**

The current South West Director (who will be referred to from here as 'Karen' – a pseudonym) valued networking and building relationships, however this practice has not been undertaken to the same degree as the West Midlands example. She had taken over from a predecessor who had already formed some strong networks, mainly with the local authorities. This gave her the opportunity to reflect on the 'leadership' approach she wanted to adopt, not having to give substantial resources to developing relationships from scratch. Karen describes her predecessor as not being involved in the day-to-day practices of the organisation, as mainly concentrated on the organisation's strategic development. Instead, when Karen described her role she outlined a broader range of responsibilities- including, volunteer coordinator, caseworker and, as she referred to, *'the general dogs body'*.

Karen prides herself on having an 'open door' policy for both service users and staff, observed by a continuous flow of people coming in and out of her office. By having a hands-on approach to frontline work she has a comprehensive understanding of the daily issues, challenges and tensions. In comparison to Abner, she has a stronger presence in taking part in the mundane processes and managing the internal dynamics, such as staff relationships. Karen claims this hands-on supportive role is essential for understanding the operational side, the challenges of the work environment, as well as keeping in touch with the service users' needs. She argues this information is beneficial in various external meetings, demonstrating her integrity to the social purpose and building external organisational legitimacy.

The agency of Karen, purposefully wanting a flat internal structure and more active involvement, has resulted in her having less intention and capacity to undertake the organisation's strategic development. Karen shares strong religious beliefs with the trustee members which forms a dominant religious logic that influences her behavior, by her actions being founded in strong values and client-focused. One explanation for the narrow approach to networking is the lack of capacity, but also by having a different approach to where she directs her networking resources. Emphasis is placed on raising awareness through speaking at various local events (see section 8.1.7.), most commonly churches, and from her biography as an ordained Christian this has been influential in her regularly performing Sunday sermons. Karen focuses on forming strong relationships with various faith institutions, as she describes this as a beneficial platform to reach the local community and to raise awareness. Adopting a localized approach to networking has

been legitimized by forming a sustainable route to accessing donations (unrestricted funds) from collections at the sermons. This is reinforced by the workforce drawing on the same religious logic and extending the network connections through their religious institutions.

The reasons for this network approach include little desire for the organisation to expand, or become more business-like in its operations, but also having established strong relationships with local authorities. These features create little drive for Karen to adopt a wide networking approach to build a high profile, since targeting community or faith events is a more beneficial approach to developing close relationships. These actions maintain normative institutions by continuing to be embedded within the community, and reinforcing its value driven and client-focused approach. These actions have created conditions where the norms and processes within the organisation are not challenged, but continue to be drawn from a religious logic. Ultimately this stable organisational behavior prevents the opportunity for organisational change.

#### **8.1.4. Alternative forms of networking**

The leadership approach in the London case study was not as directly observable, as the initial Director who founded the organisation 30 years ago (who will be referred to from now on as 'Dennis' – a pseudonym) had retired two months prior to the fieldwork. The new Director described how a considerable amount of time was currently used to maintain existing networks and establish new ones, which was vouched for by her previous



experiences and credibility within the sector, and to ensure external stakeholders and funders did not get 'spooked' by the retirement of Dennis. Networking was seen as a key strategy for the organisation, and the success was reflected by external respondents claiming the organisation had '*networks all over the place*', enhancing the embedded position within the environment. This had been a key part of Dennis' role: actively attending events, networking, and he was also a trustee for one of the 'big players' in the refugee sector. In contrast to the other examples, networking was delegated out across the team 'leaders' due to them having an active role in finding funding for their service streams, and the larger capacity fragmenting the organisational form. By delegating the responsibility it meant strong relationships could be developed, this collective action across the organisation was demonstrated in their success in accessing a wide range of funding. Dennis had been keen to actively pursue certain individuals within agencies to form strong relationships and channel resources:-

*'I think [name of organisation] all the way through has dependence on, not any one organisation, but a body of individuals, key individuals in organisations who have understood what we are about and had some kind of personal reason for doing more. Going the extra mile in their jobs, whether it was in a university, or health authority, of a local authority, or probation.....to me that's the way you operate you find the people in the institution who have a heart to push the institution in your direction. And they exist, they will always exist.'* (Former Director, London case study)

The organisation strives to operate in different fields, diversifying its revenue, and draws on multiple institutional logics (see section 7.2.8). This form of institutional work maintains

the way of working in the organisation towards having an entrepreneurial and risk-taking attitude to adopting alternative approaches.

#### **8.1.5. The role of narrative**

An additional form of institutional work occurs through narrative. Organisations portray multiple stories through a vast range of media, such as, annual reports, websites, and presenting at external events. The stories used vary depending on the audience, the intentions behind the stories, and the individuals' beliefs and values. Such discursive strategies can contribute to institutional maintenance, for example in a study of a rape crisis centre in Israel, Zilber (2009) describes the importance of stories '*as discrete and patterned units of meanings [which] take part in the ever going process of social construction by combining in complex ways reality, experience, belief, behaviour, interpretation, and interest*' (p.208).

The use of stories as a discursive leadership strategy explains differences between the three organisations. Storytelling is a fundamental practice of institutional work that is played out through the leadership role, both internally and externally, and can be thought of as a tool for networking (Peck et al., 2009). It promotes the organisation externally and raises awareness of social issues. It is equally important to engage with the internal members to give meaning and create solidarity within the organisation. The Directors demonstrated themselves to be skillful performers in storytelling (Peck et al., 2009), enhanced by their charismatic qualities as previously suggested. They were adept in

understanding their audience, which story to select to win their support, such as, success stories of the organisation, stories of client experiences, or inspirational stories of change.

#### **8.1.6. The founder story**

Across the case studies the founder story plays a key role, providing understanding for where the organisation comes from, and creating integrity for both the leader and the organisation. Schwabenland's (2006) research discusses the notion that the history and values of an organisation are kept alive and reinforced through organisational narrative. In particular she describes the '*leader as a storyteller*' and the significance of the founding role claiming '*these stories not only present an image of the organisation...but also of the individuals and groups that came together to create it and in this sense they may portray one archetype of leadership as embodied in the values and characteristics of those founders*'. Even though all three case studies have their own unique founding story, they all work as institutional maintenance of the core values and beliefs of the organisation. Therefore by reproducing the stories and '*mythologizing*' the story, it can be '*a source of inspiration, guidance and consolidation*' (Schwabenland, 2006) acting as a mechanism to reinforce the organisations' social commitment.

These founding stories played out in different forms by the three case studies. The West Midlands example had been founded by two asylum seekers, one being the current Director, and had operated from a garage for several years on a voluntary basis with just access to a phone. During the fieldwork this story was told several times by various

individuals within the organisation. This illustrates how the organisation was established to meet a gap in mainstream services and continues to do so, and also tells the story of continuity and demonstrates how far it has progressed to become a professionalized organisation. Respondents took great pride in this, illustrating the dedication and resourcefulness of those involved, although mainly the Director's commitment.

However, whilst interviewing the Director and discussing the topic of how the organisation came to be established, he appeared to be frustrated in having to repeat the story again. This could be due to the key role he plays in the story, highlighting his social position as an asylum seeker when the organisation was founded. As described in section 8.1.3 the organisation has become well-established and the Director's social position has shifted to him becoming a well-known professional in his field. There is a feeling that he no longer wants himself, or the organisation, to be attached to this previous identity but to be portrayed in its own right as an effective and professional organisation (for similar findings see Macmillan et al., 2013). This is partly due to having to conform to institutional pressures and the challenges of having to demonstrate the professionalism of the organisation and the contribution it makes to mainstream welfare services. The history of the organisation still lives through other individuals telling this story and the longevity of some of the key founding figures, which reproduces the core purpose and drive. The Director's narrative has now shifted to focus more on the present, on the challenging conditions in which the organisation is having to operate, its service provision, and arguing how they subsidize gaps in mainstream services. For example, at team meetings he stresses the importance of behaving in an efficient manner to portray a professional

external appearance, particularly in regard to statutory agencies. Such narrative illustrates the increasingly pressurised internal environment, maintaining the professional institutions through the narrative of practicing formalised and professional systems and processes, whilst also creating conditions for internal tensions to develop due to conflicting narratives.

Similarly, the founding story in the South West case study was described on various occasions during the fieldwork, by different members within the organisation. However, the story was told with more uncertainty due to the content involved, with each individual adding more detail. The first time the story was told was by a volunteer over a cup of tea in the kitchen, describing that at the time statutory social workers were failing to cope with the specialised issues facing new arrivals. This was picked up by one social worker and information was shared with the local diocese. The key member in the diocese (who is the current Chair) is stated to have called a meeting with the relevant external agencies in the area and locked them all in a room, claiming no one could leave until a solution was found. The outcome was that the organisation was formed with a start-up fund from the local authority. The volunteer was unsure about the reality of the Chair locking them in, although she claimed that it would be unsurprising due to his dominating and charismatic attitude. The way it is remembered, the volunteer could have told the founding story in a whisper, not wanting to be overheard and adding to the feeling of mystery. The content, the captivating character of the Chair, and the way in which the story is discussed by individuals, promotes the story taking on a mythological form. In turn this creates conditions for the actors to negotiate the reality of the story, acting as a process to

maintain their shared meanings, keeping alive the history and the values of the organisation (Coule and Patmore, 2013).

#### **8.1.7. The service user's story**

The South West case study also took on another approach to 'storytelling' - using service users' experiences or illustrative asylum cases. Out of the three case studies this Director discussed giving talks and presenting at local events the most. This ranged across schools, universities, an Amnesty group, the Women's Institute (WI), with the majority being at churches. She reflected on the different approaches she took, varying the narrative depending on the audience, with the rationale of gaining stakeholder support. She described on occasions telling dramatic stories as a method to engage the audience, and as the extract demonstrates an acute sense of her audiences:-

*'...with amnesty work it would be very much political, about what's going on in the world, how that is affecting the UK, kind of thing. If it was a WI group, it would be a different type of presentation because you will have some people that are anti, and need to think about how to get them engaged...so there is a difference depending on the group. Schools are great, if you can get into the schools, and get the kids thinking about compassion. 'If you had ten minutes to leave the house what would you take?' so trying to put yourself in their shoes'. (Director, South West case study)*

During meetings she would draw on service users' experiences and stories. This created a personal environment in meetings, by the respondents reflecting on the stories and

empathizing with the service users. Following the board meeting she declared this was probably not the norm in other organisations, but she felt it was important the trustees heard these stories - not only to inform them of operational issues and challenges but also to hear the perspective from the service users, which fits into the client-centred attitude of the organisation. Through this institutional work, the discursive strategy of storytelling has created conditions where decision-making processes and actions are developed under this narrative and environment. This example illustrates a clear contrast between the Directors' approach to narrative, from one concentrating on the external environment and strategic positioning to the other being focused on clients' experiences and traumatic stories. This could be a result of Karen having comparatively regular contact with service users and keeping their experiences alive and reproduced through story telling. On the other hand even though the service user narrative does not refer to faith, the focus on being client-centered resonates with the values and beliefs, which reinforces and maintains the existing institutions.

#### **8.1.8. Theories as narrative**

The London case study was established to address issues around social solidarity and injustice, which explains some staff coming from a human rights background in comparison to the other case studies, creating a stronger activism within the organisation. In addition to the founder and service user stories this organisation also used narrative focusing on the theory of change, illustrated in the vignette below. The story of the former Director meeting Paolo Freire (Brazilian educator and philosopher) and how this philosophical approach inspired the strategic direction of the organisation was repeated

on several occasions, not only by the Director but also other members of staff, and was echoed in organisational documents i.e. business plan, research reports.

### **‘The theory of change’**

We sat in a circle in an open and airy hall. I was there to observe a workshop designed to support refugees that were setting up projects to influence social change. There were around 20 individuals, from diverse ethnic backgrounds, and several facilitators. Throughout the day the individuals worked in a welcoming and friendly environment on how to start up a project, applying the ‘theory of change’ as an underlying logic model.

The former Director opened the workshop by talking about the theory of change and his experiences in the sector. His stories illustrated a long history of delivering community development work, from his biography as a youth worker, teacher and minister. When describing how he had previously met Paulo Freire, and was passionate about these principles and applying them to the organisation’s strategic direction. In brief, the model illustrates a pathway from identifying social need, to designing a project, whilst having to undertake a continuous process of reflection on the wider environment to understand where the organisation is positioned and respond to external pressures.

*‘If you are just doing action without any reflection you do end up in small corners and holes because you are not thinking about what you are doing. If you only think you don’t get anything done. So [name of organisation] cannot afford to be a talking shop. But it*



*also can't afford to mindlessly be doing the things you have always done, you have got to do both.'*

He illustrated examples of how the organisation had applied the theory of change, one being the recent development of their housing stream. He described how a rise in destitution had been identified, and whilst trying to understand the best way to implement change they looked at the organisation's capacity and the wider influential external factors. They decided to tackle this by finding a model they could adopt to develop a service, and find avenues to influence mainstream services other than lobbying, which was seen as resource heavy and falling on unsympathetic ears. Throughout this story he stressed that a project should never start with funding. Instead, the individuals should understand the project's mission and values to stay committed and not stray from this.

*Case study: London*

*Sources: Author's fieldnotes, interviews, business plan*

The vignette demonstrates the discursive practice of the former Director has become firmly rooted within the day-to-day practice in the organisation, influencing the implementation of services and the decision-making process. Whereas the other two case studies mostly react to policy changes, the London example applied more emphasis on understanding and anticipating shifting policy to be able to respond accordingly, and to try to influence policy in some form to produce social change. This was evidenced by the networking strategies previously outlined, such as, holding forums for the local authority

and third sector, and facilitating symposiums around rising social problems and migration issues.

Compared to the other two case studies it demonstrates the use of discursive strategies as a driver for transformation-driven interests, which is reflected in the respondents describing the organisation as 'risk-taking' and 'innovative'. This institutional work through discursive strategies is essential in maintaining and reinforcing the entrepreneurial logics that the Director draws upon, which has been legitimized through the various forms of success in navigating the wider environment. The actors interpret organisational practices with an entrepreneurial logic, thinking reflexively and challenging the everyday norms and practices whilst also locating themselves in the external environment. However, with key individuals leaving there was concern this theoretical discourse was at risk of decline.

## **8.2. Work conditions**

Working with ASRs comes with a number of challenges, such as, language barriers, cultural differences, and the empirical findings chapters have highlighted a number of factors that have created challenging operating conditions. The organisations have negotiated the varying pressures using different approaches, however all three case studies have found the combination of pressures has resulted in a decline in work conditions (James, 2011; Cunningham, 2014) creating internal tensions and dilemmas. This section explores this by looking at some of the contributing factors- work intensification, job insecurity and emotional demand.

### 8.2.1. Work intensification

There has been a rise in demand from service users due to increasingly restrictive policy changes, reduced state services and welfare reform, coupled with a decline of internal and external resources to meet the demand (see section 7.1.2), creating a pressurised and stressful work environment. To cope with reduced resources services have been refocused to deliver the most essential areas, but still all three case studies have reported seeing a significant rise in work intensification (Cunningham and James, 2009; FSI, 2016). The West Midlands case study responded by implementing a ticketing system to ensure the workload is spread equally across the advisors, with thirty minutes permitted to each case to ensure all service users are seen that day. However, there was not sufficient time to deal with complex cases, consisting of multifaceted needs, and these were moved to the afternoon to allow more time. Nevertheless, it was getting difficult to balance this time appropriately. The vignette below demonstrates the race to see the service users was a common theme, often running into breaks and lunch time. One respondent reflected feelings of guilt when taking ten minutes out to eat her lunch, illustrating the constant high energy levels used.

#### **'Before the storm hits'**

From the outside of the building it appears to be a normal grey block of offices. There is no external sign or indication of the type of services the [name] organisation provides. On entering the building there is a mass of service users lining the way up the stairs to the organisation's entrance. Many of the service users have been there for several

hours already, some have travelled across the UK for the specialised free services, and there is a feeling of anticipation as to whether they will be seen by an advisor that day.

Once the office has opened the service users pour into the reception area awaiting to be assigned a ticket depending on their migration issues. The staff and volunteers have to navigate themselves through the crowd into the separate main office. The waiting area is already buzzing with activity, filled with the noise of crying babies, conversations spoken in different languages, telephones ringing, and a vast mix of service users and issues.

It is during this time, when the tickets are being assigned by the receptionist, that the staff and volunteers make coffees and teas before starting the hectic day. This is their time, away from the service users and hidden in the kitchen, which the staff and volunteers share together. Conversation is about their families, holidays, advice on clients, up dates for the day, and generally forming a sense of 'togetherness'. There is an understanding that this time, 'before the storm hits', is for them to gather themselves, to take a deep breath, before they take their seats to work one by one through the caseloads. By the end of the week the energetic faces look more and more worn out, from hearing stories of hardship, and feeling the constant pressure of the numbers that are waiting to be seen.

*Case study: West Midlands*

*Sources: Author's fieldnotes*

Concerns were raised about the time restrictions with service users and increasing emphasis on bureaucratic systems, such as writing up notes, or inputting monitoring data, affecting the ability to build relationships and offer emotional support to the service users. Tensions were rising with frontline workers being asked to complete monitoring forms for different funders, and management becoming frustrated with poorly entered data used to demonstrate impact to funders. Often respondents' prioritised service users over paper work, which would be disregarded and added to the mounting workload and feelings of work intensification.

### **8.2.2. Job insecurity**

Cunningham (2008) suggests that low work morale is not only generated by exogenous pressures but also by internal relationships. As a result of the highly pressurised work environments the respondents had less time for informalities between the workforce, and building a sense of morale or solidarity amongst the team. Work morale was further undermined by redundancies in response to funding cutbacks, and consequently, employees working under the threat of job insecurity (Cunningham et al., 2014):-

*'The whole advice team was up for redundancy not that long after I started and was reprieved last minute by an injection of funding...You are constantly dealing with that,.. [Name] was made redundant, and she had been here for ten years or so. It is not personal but it's the post that is no longer funded.'* (Adviser, London case study)

In response to threats of redundancies London respondents reduced their working hours or took a pay cut to prevent others from being made redundant, illustrating strong working relationships. Unfortunately, redundancies were still made the following year. Although few redundancies were made overall across the organisations, feelings of job uncertainty were a common feature due to the short-term contracts and precarious funding cycles. Undertaking the continuous process of applying for funding, creative rebranding, and waiting for lengthy application procedures meant the future for some could often be uncertain with looming threats of redundancy:-

*'We have on two separate occasions given [name] three months redundancy notice, fortunately I have always got the funding in before the three months have been up. But... you have to say,.. we haven't got the funding yet, we have hung on as long as possible, we have got a bid outstanding, but I can't say for certain that we will get it. And it's not fair on you, if you want to look for something else, to give you that time to do that.'* (Director, South West case study)

It was evident that 'job flexibility' was an essential tool to prevent loss of staff even when funding had ended. This meant individuals moved around a lot, and their job specifications were broad and continuously expanding. Respondents across the case studies were faced with poor pay, short term contracts, or in some cases had no contracts. The current financial crisis has heightened feelings of uncertainty, with austerity cuts and an increasingly competitive funding environment, and for those frontline staff responsible for finding their own funding this heightens work pressures and anxieties. The vignette 'you could hear a pin drop' in section 7.2.5. illustrates a combination of these pressures,

job insecurity and high staff turnover that was affecting the solidarity of the workforce and contributing to low organisational morale and deflation.

### **8.2.3. Emotional burnout**

In addition to the increasing complexities of service users' cases, the respondents were dealing with trauma on a daily basis, with service users relaying stories of their experiences of fleeing from persecution. The workforce were subjected to additional emotional demand whilst feeling they could not give appropriate emotional support due to work intensification. In all three case studies there were a number of service users with mental health issues, which made it more challenging to give the appropriate support for these complex needs. Respondents described how more time and specialist support was needed for these complex cases, neither of which they had and repeatedly reported the limited external services available. On top of the high emotional demands and challenging cases, the vignette demonstrates all the case studies faced regular emergency cases:-

#### **'Emergency cases'**

Today is an allocated day for the team to catch-up. I am told it is space for team meetings, planning for the week, and completing any pending paper work. It also allows a break from having to deal with the emotional demands and stresses of caseloads during drop-in days, however it is noted that regular occurrences of emergency cases disrupt this process:-

*'It is difficult because you have a team meeting and there can be an emergency situation so you can't sit in a meeting you have to deal with it. There are a lot of emergencies unfortunately, people getting detained, going to hospitals. And you deal with the emergencies when they happen.'* (Adviser)

Early on in the day a young unaccompanied asylum seeker supported by the service is being held in a prison cell. He has mental health issues and it seems the police were called because he was getting 'out of control'. They have been told he has taken all of his anti-depressants and is choosing not to eat. The police have not been able to find any immigration papers, and there is a high risk that he will be detained and immediately deported. The team have a limited amount of time to find a solution to support the young boy and hopefully gain his release. Some staff have come in on their day off, working together to pool their resources, some ringing external agencies or visiting the prison. There is a highly intense and stressful atmosphere, acknowledging that every hour is crucial to find a solution for this young boy, driven by the conviction that if they don't get him released they have failed to help him.

*Case study: South West*

*Sources: Author's fieldnotes and interview*

The vignette demonstrates that it is the risk of the worst case scenario - deportation - that heightens work pressure. The long working hours, regular exposure to high emotional demands, and uncertainty was creating a stressful and emotionally loaded work environment. In recent years the organisations have seen a rise in destitution that has not only added further strain to access limited resources, particularly if the individual has



NRPF (Randall, 2015) but created further emotional strain on staff through witnessing the increasing hardship of the service users. The multiple factors contributed to creating conditions that could have detrimental effects on the respondents, resulting in stress, demotivation, and as the extract demonstrates could lead to burn out (Robinson, 2013a; 2013b).

*'Pressure I suppose, burning up and trying to help too many people. And not knowing where to stop, where to draw that line, you have to look after yourself. You can't carry on helping other people all the time, it would be at the cost of your health'* (Adviser, South West case study)

All three case studies were successfully supporting high numbers of service users in highly pressurised environments, and through resilience and commitment were meeting the needs of the service users by any means possible. However, lack of capacity was a key feature that was affecting the efficiency across the case studies, as limited resources were focused on supporting the service users this was to the detriment of other aspects. For example, internal meetings were either forgotten or missed due to staff not having the capacity to attend them. As this was the main form of communication within some case studies, this was resulting in a breakdown of internal communication. Furthermore, individuals less frequently attended external meetings or training due to limited capacity and seeing it as a burden on top of their workload. This decline in interaction, internally and externally, was having a knock on effect on sharing information and expertise, building relationships, but also maintaining a sense of solidarity within the case studies and across the sector.

Other concerns were that many members of the workforce were not trained as social workers or did not have expertise to manage this added emotional demand. Whilst there were often social work students undertaking placements, the staff had varied backgrounds and often were employed through the volunteer route rather than for expertise. By drawing on wider literature from the social work field (also see p.79 for examples) this echoes similar concerns of work intensification and high demand, provides insight on how this additional burden may impact on the workforce, and lessons that could be applied to the refugee field on how to address these issues. Robinson (2013a) describes a method of managing this emotional burden by staff receiving regular supervision and allowing individuals to off load emotional baggage to promote healthy wellbeing. However, in the South West and West Midlands formal supervision had come to a stand-still due to work intensification and lack of capacity. Space also played a factor due to there not being an appropriate quiet and confidential space, with service users constantly coming in and out of the office. Limited support was given informally through tea breaks and sharing lunch, generally not following appropriate procedures, however these were also under threat due to high workloads:-

*'We have a student that was here and she wrote a critical report on [organisation name], and she picked up there should be more supervision for each member of staff, to off load. We do a lot of offloading to each other generally at the end of the day, but it's hard, as I say, to close the door at 4 and then have an hour and a half just to sit down in the office ourselves. Because the phone will still be going, the clients will still be there, we will have particular things to chase up...so we try to fit it in.'* (Adviser, South West case study)

### **8.3. The deepest bottom layer**

Emotions, values and morals tend to be ignored in the analysis of institutions and institutional processes and have only recently been recognised within the literature as essential underpinnings of institutional work (Moisander et al., 2016). This section argues that agency should not be viewed necessarily as rational behaviour that follows a logical process of sense making, but rather a micro-level analysis needs to be undertaken to understand the influences from emotions and values on institutional work. This bottom up approach demonstrates the role of emotions and values informing collective action and as a factor in explaining organisational change.

#### **8.3.1. Emotions**

Section 8.2.3. described the potential risk of emotional burnout from the workforce being subjected to work intensification and, in particular, from encountering the traumatic stories from the service users on a regular basis. Many ASRs experience trauma after fleeing conflict areas and/or throughout the refugee journey whilst trying to seek sanctuary in a host country. Trauma can be a response to a number of issues, being a victim of torture, physical violence and sexual-based violence (UNHCR guidelines, 2003). Each service users' story can differ by severity and effect on the individual:-

*'Yeah it has always been pretty full on...we were not meeting many women that came out of DRC [Democratic Republic of Congo] that weren't raped...I was quite new to it then so I found it quite shocking...Yeah I had women that were disclosing being in rape camps in*

*Somalia and Sudan, and places like that, and that's pretty grim.'* (Adviser, South West case study)

In response the South West example implemented an in-house counselling service, whilst the other two referred victims to external agencies. However, this long-term intensive support meant extensive waiting lists to refer service users, increasingly becoming overstretched with pressures on services alongside austerity cuts. The nature of the work requires staff to collect details on the service users' situation to be able to provide the appropriate support and advice. This would often lead to the service user conveying their stories, how they came to leave their country, experiences of conflict areas, and their journey to the UK. Some stories would consist of torture, trafficking, sex work and child soldiers:-

*'It used to be really bad. Some of the cases we had I wouldn't even tell you they were horrendous, and people would spill it out when you weren't quite expecting it. Yeah it was pretty grim.'* (Adviser, South West case study)

Unless these stories were told in a counselling capacity, many of the employees and volunteers would not have been trained to manage these emotional demands, that would, as the extract states, often 'spill out'. However, as well as adding to the emotional burden, the service user discourse seemed to serve another function, acting as a mechanism that justified the work conditions and fuelled the resilience of the workforce. Most respondents had become involved due to some form of interest in the social purpose, often

demonstrating strong views and opinions towards supporting new arrivals. The rationales differed, stemming from religious beliefs, humanitarian principles, and empathy from themselves having a migrant background. Nonetheless, the individuals were like-minded in their views that ASRs deserved access to support and that their basic human needs should be met. By hearing the stories first-hand, the individuals watched the service users reliving their traumatic experiences. The workforce would encounter feelings, such as, humility, grief, shame, depression, fear, from reliving these stories, that could trigger emotions within the workforce, such as, distress, sorrow, helplessness. On a simplistic level this discourse acted as a mechanism to eliminate those that were not dedicated to the cause to those that had an element of 'robustness' to manage these situations:-

*'You need a robustness of spirit to be able to cope sometimes with everything that is going on. And also when you hear the snippets of people's stories. It's all very well when you have watched things on television, when you suddenly see a physical reality of what the TV is telling you of that country, close to hand, sitting next to you. It is very different.'*

(Volunteer, South West case study)

It is not the direct emotions relayed by the service users that are the drivers influencing the processes of institutional work (Moisander et al., 2016), but instead it is the interaction between the service user and staff that should be viewed as the focal point. The service user discourse of their traumatic stories confirmed and reinforced the workforce's values and beliefs towards the social purpose, which was interpreted and fuelled individuals' commitment to the work they undertook. It is the emotional work generated during the interaction between the individuals that plays a role in influencing institutions and

institutional processes. Using terms coined by Moisander et al. (2016) the emotion work is evidently evoking, inspiring and upholding the institutions and institutional process, particularly from the collective action, adding to the workforce commitment and dedication to the work. For example, all three case studies described staff working unpaid over their contracted hours, often beyond their duties and responsibility:-

*‘And I do think some of our advice team do take [service users] into their own homes and look after them, and they do the things that you think which they shouldn’t be doing. But they do it because they are dealing with real needs all the time ....seeing children that are going to be on the streets or women that have escaped from slave labour or terrible conditions.’* (Trustee, London case study)

This process of discursive emotion work is not only limited to the service user and workforce interaction, but also through a process of informal interaction between the workforce during lunch times and breaks when service users cases are shared. By doing this it enables the workforce to collate expertise with colleagues, but is also a method to collectively share emotions and feelings towards the social purpose. It not only confirms the relevance of the work that they do, but through collective action it has legitimized this as a normalized way of operating. The vignette demonstrates that with less capacity for formal supervision other practices and interactions are adopted as coping mechanisms to maintain wellbeing and encourage work morale.

### **‘Sharon’s trustees’ teas’**

The work space is chaotic. Once buzzed in and up the stairs to the offices, there is a labyrinth of different rooms with no information on where they go. Service users, volunteers, staff all move in a fluid movement around each other, all seeming to have an understanding of a system to the chaotic space. At some point a person spots the lost look on your face, and with a warm welcoming smile, guides you to the right person.

The main office is cramped. Desks are piled in, the doorbell’s buzzing, and there is a constant stream of service users looking for a staff member. The staff chat over the desks, seamlessly moving between discussions on different cases, advice on legislation, to gossiping about their personal life. Staff try to find confidential space in the maze of different rooms, or a quiet space to talk on phones in the corridors. In some cases service users are seen in the main office, adding to the already brimming level of activity. This high level of activity builds throughout the day, trying to work through the list of names, one by one. Breaks are missed, lunch is missed, coffees and teas are snatched whenever possible.

Sharon, a long standing board member noted the increasing demands on workload and also the emotional strain *‘from hearing horrendous stories day in day out’*, and how in recent years the work environment had become even more *‘frantic’*. Due to all focus being directed at the service users, the organisation lacked in providing formal supervision to the advice workers, to reflect on the emotional demand from the work. What initially started as a tea here and there to offer a supportive ear to one or two staff

members, evolved to become a regular form of informal support. 'Sharon's trustees' teas' became a way for the staff to offload their emotional baggage, sometimes in a local café to find some 'space' away from the organisation, or catching a spare moment in the labyrinth of rooms.

*Case study: South West*

*Sources: Author's fieldnotes and interview*

The vignette demonstrates that emotion work informs the beliefs and attitudes towards everyday practices, and through the strength of this done collectively it influences emotion work on institutional processes, such as, generating a strong work ethos and commitment. In turn this shapes organisational response, by being resilient and robust in the face of challenges and pressures, particularly when subjected to political opposition to immigration this reaffirms the work even more.

### **8.3.2. Values**

An alternative approach to understanding the underpinnings of institutional work is by bringing values back into the analysis. All three case studies demonstrated a strong work ethic, commitment and passion towards the social purpose of the organisation. The respondents believed that mainstream services had failed to support this vulnerable social group, placing them in a marginalised position in the welfare system. Consequently, this developed a sense of value towards the work they were undertaking, filling a gap in welfare provision, and supporting the most vulnerable in society. This created a sense of



solidarity within the organisation, which was further reinforced by service user and leader discourses used as mechanisms to share beliefs, values, and maintain these institutional processes. The combination of beliefs and values, compassion and empathy, and solidarity all contributed to maintaining and developing a strong commitment to the social purpose. This was demonstrated through the fieldwork by staff working long hours, some on a voluntary basis, and often 'going the extra mile' for service users. Even though the actors come from different social positions and are drawing on differing institutional logics to inform their behaviour, it is evident that there is a deeper and more underlying presence of values and morals that fuel the practices and processes within the organisations. Or as described by Klein (2015) 'value-substances are the key to identify and qualify institutional logics' (p.328).

One example of values underpinning workforce practice and demonstrating a form of institutional work is the respondents providing a non-judgemental and impartial service, by treating all service users as equals and refraining from prioritising cases unless it was an emergency situation. The respondents described how compared to mainstream services that treated service users as 'bogus asylum seekers' until proven otherwise, the case studies started from the premise that each case was legitimate:-

*'Our priority is not why they are here, ours is they are here so help them, not why. I have never asked a person why they have come to the UK. I think it is too intrusive and the Home Office will ask them that any way. We don't have a say in that matter if they can stay or not, we can help them to talk on their behalf, or write a reference on their behalf but it does not go beyond that.'* (Adviser, South West case study)

The respondents were committed to providing an unbiased service, not to judge whether an individual was 'deserving or undeserving' of the organisation's support due to believing this would tamper with their values. This meant no individual was turned away without some form of support or referral. Consequently, there were times when the respondents were faced with moral dilemmas by being aware of service users undertaking unlawful activities (working illegally or using false passports), or highlighting doubts about some of the asylum claims. Similar to Robinson's study (2013a) the reduced organisational capacity meant a decline in the case studies actively campaigning or lobbying. Instead, the respondents' actions of persistently trying to access limited resources, advocating for their service users, letting unlawful activities go unnoticed, was their political response to protesting against government policy and supporting those marginalised from mainstream welfare support. This collective action of institutional work, providing non-biased open services, has normalised the values of the individuals and the organisations. By these values being embedded in the mundane practices of the organisations it explains how the organisations continue to operate in a committed and dedicated manner to the social purpose.

This value-driven feature is viewed as an essential component of the third sector, placing organisations in a comparatively competitive position to the public and private sectors. What further strengthens this position is whether the values that drive the collective of individuals are shared values of the organisations, creating what Stride and Higgs (2013) coined a 'value fit'. Supporting this notion the findings showed the individuals choose careers in organisations where they had the opportunity to play out their values and

interests, and by achieving positive outcomes this gave the individuals satisfaction in what they are doing. This process of successfully achieving individual and organisational values is fundamental in influencing high levels of staff commitment. From the nature of the case studies work, based on addressing human rights and tackling social justice, meeting these values will heighten the justification of their practice and commitment to the organisation.

#### **8.4. Summary**

This chapter moves on from the restricted parameters of institutional logics to provide a more detailed account of the processes and agency of actors drawing upon different logics. By unpacking the micro-level it demonstrates a number of dynamics, often unnoticed in wider literature, that are situated in different levels and interrelate with one another. Firstly, the top down approach focuses on the powerful forces of leadership as institutional work, explored through storytelling and networking. Similarities were evident across the Directors: the value ascribed to networking; charismatic figures; and skill in telling apt stories to different stakeholders. Initially, all the Directors were involved in the everyday operations, but as the organisations became more established the attention and resources towards networking also grew. Even so, the degree and contrasts in practice of networking varied by Director and contributed to shaping the case studies into different forms. These differences were influenced by several factors at an individual-level, such as, capacity, stakeholders targeted, and the agency of the Directors drawing on different institutional logics. These nuanced accounts show institutional work can be complex and

involve different processes and practices, for example, storytelling was also used as a mechanism during networking.

The analysis illustrates how work conditions have declined as a result of pressures from the wider context. These direct observations on the organisational setting have been essential in illuminating how the organisations were affected by the external environment, such as, work intensification from rising demand as a result of restrictive welfare entitlements and austerity cuts. This everyday perspective often goes unnoticed in the literature, but is essential to understand the daily pressures of the work conditions and the internal dilemmas and tensions that are faced. In particular, emotional wellbeing is not a common theme used in third sector literature, therefore, social work literature has been drawn upon to show the gap in knowledge. This has highlighted the need for organisations to manage these pressures and emotional strain, possibly adopting principles and practices from the social work discipline, to ensure the organisations continued to deliver quality services and minimise risk on staff emotional wellbeing.

In this case the decline in work conditions highlighted the relevance and influences of the deepest bottom layer - emotions and values. These features are typically ignored from analysis, but have been demonstrated to play a key role in understanding institutional work, by looking even deeper at the underpinnings of institutional logics. The collective process of shared emotions and values provides a bottom up approach to influencing practices and processes. The different dynamics clearly complimented each other by the

process of leadership work actively engaging with a diverse range of external stakeholders, gaining their support, and steering the direction of the organisation. Whereas the everyday service user discourse acts as 'emotion work' in motivating and inspiring the individuals to be committed to support this group, and on occasion respondents referred to the job as being a life style choice. These different dynamics and processes, how they interrelate and promote internal and external legitimacy, all contribute to the understanding of the practices undertaken and develop the moral foundations of an organisation. The combination of emotions and values is an essential bottom up approach in maintaining and reinforcing the commitment of the workforce and creating a strong ethos, justifying the poor work conditions, by developing a sense of 'robustness' and emotional resilience to the rising stress and emotional strain.

## CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION

The purpose of the thesis has been to explore and provide insight on how the environment is influencing organisational change in TSOs. To do this case studies were undertaken on three ASR TSOs to look in-depth at organisational behaviour in one policy setting. Undertaking an in-depth analysis of organisational change has identified the importance of unpacking the varying influences, both exogenous and endogenous, which have underpinned the empirical findings chapters for this thesis.

This conclusion aims to draw out the main arguments from the empirical findings, highlighting key reflections and how the findings fill gaps in knowledge on organisational change in the third sector. To do this the discussion will cover the four themes, **context, activities, dynamics and form**, developed in Chapter Three (see pp.58-95) to identify how the research contributes to the wider literature and analytical framework. These themes have provided the general aims and research focus for the thesis, and when viewed together, illustrate an all-round and more robust picture of organisational change. Reflections on the research will be outlined to understand the limitations of the findings and identify where additional research is needed for further enquiry.

### 9.1 Context

The research found there have been significant changes within the wider context over the last few decades. External changes have created challenges for the case studies,

although challenges were not always perceived to be negative. Challenges were also interpreted as bringing new opportunities, scope for improvisation and manoeuvre, and supported the organisational development to become established and professionalised to compete successfully in an increasingly competitive market. In comparison to some third sector commentary organisational change was not solely dependent on one institutional regime - the government contracting out its public services or the increasing emphasis on creating a market-like environment (Benson, 2014). However, the findings showed an increased role of TSOs in public service delivery generating coercive isomorphic pressures to adopt bureaucratic procedures, heightened accountability, and retendering producing emotional upheaval within the workplace (Cunningham, 2008). The research also found organisational change demonstrated to be a more complex and embedded process.

The findings identified that the wider context is multi-layered, consisting of a number of exogenous pressures, which played varying roles in shaping organisational behaviour. This broad perspective of the environment could be because the research focused on a broader sub-field rather than a specific policy or practice, and the wider gaze on organisational change showed pressures shifted over time. Unlike other subsectors a fundamental dilemma for the case studies arose from supporting a highly politicised and contested group. In addition to the financial crisis and austerity measures, and changing approaches by the government to the third sector, the case studies have always had an additional element to negotiate - anti-immigration rhetoric and xenophobic attitudes - and found these to be influential on the everyday experiences within each organisation.

Having to predict potential upheaval by either the public or political parties from rising hostility towards migration, has meant the organisations have been adept at operating in uncertainty and adopting a crisis mode. This has served the case studies well in recent turbulent times of economic downturn and austerity.

In recent years there has been a rise in political conflict over issues of immigration, and the organisations (compared to those in other subsectors) have had to be politically attuned to the wider context. They have been keen to gain support from the local authority, therefore successfully investing in relationships with key local authority members and finding ‘champions’ within the sector. The Labour era was described as having more accessible funding, albeit varying by locality, and, conflicting with the account of other commentators (Carmel and Harlock, 2008), the relationships were based on ‘interdependence’ between the two sectors (Crouch, 2011). In recent years the Coalition and Conservative governments have become increasingly hard-line in their approach to supporting the third sector, with hostility towards immigration demonstrated by welfare support being withdrawn from new arrivals. These shifts in attitude and the significant austerity measures faced by each local authority has meant a decline in statutory funding for the case studies, but more importantly a loss of organisational intelligence and trust on which the relationships were initially founded.

This research contributes empirical evidence on relationships between the state and the sector by showing the case studies were not heavily dependent on the local authority,



due to not being solely reliant on statutory funding or having a fairly hands off funding arrangement. The situation now presents the local authority as dependent on the case studies providing essential services for ASR, although they are neither fully paying for them, nor providing appropriate support to access new revenue. Fortunately, the case studies have always had to be resourceful in finding resources, and such changing relationships have not inevitably been to the detriment of the services. The research forecasts future relationships to be based on limited funds to support services, fewer resources to build and maintain relationships, and funding arrangements increasingly using prime contracting and retendering. This highlights concerns of disadvantaging smaller organisations and contributing to the debate on polarisation within the sector.

The most detrimental effect on the organisations is the continuously shifting and hostile immigration legislation, withdrawing welfare entitlements and increasing complexity in navigating the asylum system. However, rather than passively responding to the shifting policies, the organisations have demonstrated agency in how they have interpreted the environment, and strategically negotiated where and how they gain support from external stakeholders and building networks. The combination of complexities within the environment has continually kept these organisations 'on their toes', by not having the luxury of being solely dependent on statutory funding, nor having a substantial fundraising element, but having to be resourceful and entrepreneurial in accessing different funding streams. The organisations quickly learnt the 'rules of the game' of the funding environment, creative rebranding, diversifying income streams, and drawing on particular

skills and expertise. In particular, the case studies have had to work even harder to build external legitimacy and credibility due to the politicised nature of the group.

This research provides an important contribution to wider literature by demonstrating a perhaps more optimistic account of TSOs navigating these challenging times, rather than what might be seen as characteristically bleak or broad brushed perspectives. Times have been undoubtedly challenging for the organisations, having to face tensions and dilemmas from increasing demand and a squeeze on resources, but the organisations have shown agency in responding to the environment. One example has been the widening remit to support Eastern European migrants with the opening of some European borders. The findings demonstrate the agency of the organisations in learning to cope with the multi-layered complexities in the environment. The South West and West Midlands are described as improvisation, whereas the London case study has shown stronger characteristics of innovation and entrepreneurship throughout the empirical chapters. Organisational agency has been illustrated through several mechanisms, such as, mission flexibility, diversification of resources, and demonstrating the ability of actors to navigate the operating environment.

This research has contributed to literature by telling the story from an ASR TSOs perspective of experiencing the environment, providing grounded empirical data on the complexities, uncertainty, and messiness of the wider context. Undoubtedly the marked difference illustrating distinctions to other subsectors that are viewed more favourably, is

the xenophobic attitudes and racism these TSOs experience. These challenges and tensions created by political controversy are likely to continue with the outcome of Brexit and the refugee crisis making it increasingly relevant to investigate such issues.

## **9.2. Activities**

The research contributes to wider refugee third sector literature by describing how the financial crisis and austerity measures have had a detrimental effect on the scope and scale of services delivered within the refugee sector in the UK. As government attitudes towards immigration have shifted there has been a significant withdrawal of funds and support to ASRs, with the government increasingly perceiving ASRs as ‘undeserving’ of welfare services. In particular, the Home Office has made significant cutbacks to contracts or put them out to retender with a clear focus to drive down costs and attached requirements seen as oppressive by participants. The case studies have been fairly unscathed by these circumstances and have weathered the recession reasonably well, due to the two national agencies (Refugee Action and Refugee Council) being the prime contractors, sheltering other agencies from the competitive contract culture, and ultimately the brunt of the detrimental cutbacks. Nevertheless, the findings reveal that the substantial shrinking of the national agencies has had a knock on effect on the refugee sector (Hill, 2011), by the scope of service provision, type of activities provided, and the feeling of unity across the refugee sector.

The findings reveal the pressures on service provision and how this has shifted the focus of delivery over the years. Previously the case studies delivered a wide range of services to meet the varying needs of the clients. However, the financial crisis and loss of subcontracts with the national agencies, has meant a significant decline in services focused on integration and cohesion, such as, employment support, English classes, and community development work (Cairns et al., 2006). If these types of services are delivered it is now done on an informal basis, provided on a shoe-string or through the un-paid commitment of dedicated volunteers.

The squeeze on funding and resources is just one side of the story. All three case studies have seen a significant increase in demand on their advice services and advocacy (Cabinet Office, 2012), moving this to be the organisations' core function. This trend is explained by a number of changes in policy, such as: widening their remit to include Eastern European migrants; changes to immigration policies making the asylum process more complex at a time of legal aid cutbacks; and welfare reform increasing the numbers of individuals living in hardship. This has been coupled with a squeeze on resources within each organisation and external agencies. As a consequence, the workforce has faced work intensification and mounting pressure to cope with complex caseloads, and a rise in destitution. Resources have had to be refocused due to extreme pressure to deal with rising numbers of emergency cases, and putting other services, such as, campaigning (LBF, 2017), on the 'back burner'.

This research provides empirical findings showing the organisations have been pushed into delivering public services, due to their specialised expertise, language and cultural skills, and strong connections within the community. To cope with this the organisations' have had to restructure and refocus resources to continue to meet increasing demand. For example, some activities have had to be reduced including, campaigning and lobbying, community development work, wellbeing, and integration to concentrate resources on meeting daily demands. However, at a time of a refugee crisis and rising xenophobic attitudes the decline in such services raises concern that this may impact this group, in particular with less resources targeted at promoting social cohesion and integration.

Other studies have pointed out this decline in integration and resettlement services due to undertaking defensive services (Griffiths et al., 2005; Phillimore, 2010). This research expands on this by explaining that shifting service provision is not only a product of the state rolling back service provision, but also through organisational agency in refocusing the services to meet rising demand from service users. The organisations had varying success in obtaining local authority funding: instead, charitable trusts foundations, and particularly the Big Lottery Fund, were taking a leading role in funding services. This illustrates that services, arguably the responsibility of the state, are being subsidized by charitable funding bodies. Previously, such funding bodies would typically fund innovative projects and more community development work, and is indicative of how funding is now being distributed by activity and highlighting potential gaps in service provision.

It also highlights that organisations are not solely becoming professionalised and adopting bureaucratic systems due to commissioning and marketisation, which often attracts the most attention in third sector literature. Instead it shows the role of other funding bodies in the process of organisational change. For example, the Big Lottery Fund application process heightens work pressures, accountability, performance monitoring, impact measurement, cost effectiveness, which all echo similar features of contractual arrangements. Strict requirements across the funding bodies have influenced the organisations to adopt more bureaucratic systems, formalized procedures and policies and implementing a more hierarchical staff system. Being commissioned by the state to deliver public services only provides part of the story on professionalization of TSOs, as there appears to be institutional isomorphism across funding bodies in the requirements and processes of the funding arrangements.

As the literature suggests (see, for example, Milbourne (2013) and Carmel and Harlock (2008)), it is challenging for the organisations to adapt to these requirements from funders, but this study provides a more optimistic account of this change rather than being driven by marketization and the government wanting to undercut costs. Instead, the findings show agency in how the actors interpret these changes, viewing the implementation of formalised procedures, policies and practices as a positive development for the organisations, to become more efficient and professional in how each operates. The organisations undoubtedly face dilemmas and tensions, with some actors resistant to the new ways of working, and concern that time is taken away from clients.

However, the case studies negotiate the terms, trying to find the right balance, to ensure they do not stray from being client focused.

### **9.3. Dynamics**

The research intended to go beyond the general level of analysis adopted in the wider literature, to concentrate on 'looking inside' the case studies on what is happening within the organisational settings that influences the processes of organisational change. Firstly, the research contributes to the literature countering the view of the third sector as a homogenous entity that experiences and interprets the wider environment in a similar way. The research provides nuanced accounts that demonstrate agency in how exogenous and endogenous pressures are interpreted and experienced. This thesis argues that research should not shy away from the complexities and uncertainty of organisational change, and in reaction produce over simplified and broad brushed statements. Instead, by embracing the messiness and celebrating the complexities it provides a deeper, more robust account, of the process of organisational change from a micro perspective.

The research provides particular contribution to theoretical debates on institutional work, by adding detailed empirical evidence on the varying practices undertaken by actors. These support the principles of institutional work on intentional, purposeful and reflexive action, but provide further depth on the processes, relationships and interpretations that have taken place. In particular, the research has shown that institutional work can be performed as a top down approach, from the powerful forces of leaders, or from a bottom

up approach by the strength of collective action by the workforce. The different examples of institutional work create varying influences on institutions and are useful to explain how the internal dynamics inform organisational behaviour.

This thesis supports Lawrence et al. (2013) methodological argument on the relevance of undertaking an ethnographic approach to understand the everyday practices, consisting of what this thesis terms the 'deepest bottom layer'. This level of analysis has been essential in understanding the other processes and forces at play, rather than only drawing on institutional logics. The underpinnings of emotions and values that are shared by the actors provide a level of understanding across the organisations on the resilience of the workforce, providing justifications to practices i.e. working in declining work conditions. It also illuminates how the interaction of the institutional logics are interpreted by the actors, shaped by the underpinnings of emotions and values brought by the individuals, and the different mechanisms of using discourse as emotion work. The thesis argues that all the levels of analysis are essential in understanding organisational change, but this deepest bottom layer of emotions and values is fundamental to understand the underlying driving force that sustains a strong work commitment and ethic even during the most turbulent times.

#### **9.4. Form**

In contrast to empirical studies and wider literature which perceive organisational change as a 'broad brush' occurrence across the sector, or as a more or less homogenous



experience, this study stresses the importance of understanding how and why organisations are changing in this environment. The research demonstrates an element of organisational agency by the varying degrees of professionalization undertaken by each case study. At a basic level the organisations were driven by this process to differentiate themselves from informal, ad-hoc RCOs, which would strategically position (Chew, 2005) the case studies to appear more attractive to possible funders. At a more complex level this explains why the organisations have moved into a niche position to deliver specialized advice, due to limited competition in the subsector and locality, heightening their chances of survival (Chew and Osborne, 2009).

This partially explains the development of hybrid forms, by having to undergo specific processes to take on this niche position and adopt associated characteristics. The niche position and hybrid forms start to explain the success of the case studies in adapting and navigating the various exogenous pressures - by enabling the case studies to take on professional operating styles, whilst remaining driven by strong values and passion. However, it does not explain why or how different approaches to niche positioning occur, or how varying forms of hybrid organisations are produced. The table below outlines the different features and characteristics that have informed the development of hybrid forms.

Table 9.9. Different case study characteristics producing varying forms of hybrid organisations

CHARACTERISTICS	WEST MIDLANDS CASE STUDY	SOUTH WEST CASE STUDY	LONDON CASE STUDY
<b>HYBRID FORM</b>	Professional/ family hybrid	Faith hybrid	Entrepreneurial hybrid
<b>SIZE</b>	Medium	Small	Medium-large
<b>STAFF STRUCTURE</b>	Hierarchal	Flat	Hierarchical
<b>PROFESSIONALISATION</b>	Staff recruited from volunteers and professionals	Staff recruited from volunteers	Staff formally recruited by profession
<b>LEADERSHIP STYLE</b>	Dominating role	Motherly role	Activist role
<b>FUNDING SOURCES</b>	Diverse- mainly a mix of Home Office, charitable trust and Big Lottery Fund	Diverse- mainly a mix of statutory, charitable trusts and donations	Diverse- mainly a mix of Home Office, local authority, charitable trust and Big Lottery Fund
<b>LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION</b>	Contractual- Number of Home Office contracts, limited LA funding	Hands off- Continuous rolling contract as a subcontractor with LA	Embedded- Number of Home Office contracts, DWP, range of funding and partnership with LA
<b>KEY EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS</b>	Local CAB	Other faith organisations	Agencies in other policy fields i.e. housing
<b>NATURE OF SERVICES PROVISION</b>	Advice as core- subcontractor to Home Office, Public Health	Advice as core- other activities focused on emotional wellbeing	Advice as core- form new partnerships across policy fields, social enterprise
<b>BIOGRAPHIES, IDENTITIES, VALUES</b>	Migrant biography, professionals and academics	Committed members practicing religious beliefs, professionals	Mixture of faith, migrant biographies, professionals and more corporate influence
<b>MOTIVATIONS</b>	Driven by social purpose and own experiences	Driven by social purpose and faith	Driven by social purpose, own experiences, faith, and career
<b>SURVIVAL STRATEGIES</b>	Volunteers and expanding services	Donations and resources with faith based organisations	Setting up a social enterprise and generating funds
<b>ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE APPROACH</b>	Conformity	Resistance	Innovation

Three theoretical pen portraits have been outlined below to highlight how organisational change is produced by the development of hybrid organisational forms, consisting of a complex range of systems and procedures, and different roles of actors and agency.

## **Professional/ family hybrid**

The West Midlands case study had established itself from an informal group of asylum seekers to a formalised organisation that resembles the structure of a CAB - a large volunteer base and a focus on delivering advice. By sitting on the CAB board the Director was able to draw on the other organisation's logics that are heavily shaped by statutory funding and professional principles. Such a development was rationalised due to the West Midlands being unsuccessful in gaining financial support from the local authority, which further legitimised the CAB as a successful model. This has been further pushed by a strong presence of a professional logic amongst trustees (formed of highly successful professionals) since the early years, which has been reinforced by a driven and entrepreneurial Director. The Director, a former asylum seeker, was driven to develop a successful organisation, no longer running in an informal, ad hoc manner. At this organisational level he shifted his logic from a migrant framework to focusing on a professional logic.

The workforce had always been established of migrants and been multicultural. It has grown in size to reflect the increasing demand on the services. Although the workforce strived to provide quality services and had a strong work ethic, driven by their own migrant biographies, the workforce were still holding on to a family-like environment similar to the early years. This was reinforced by continuing to practice daily rituals, such as sharing lunch together and referring to each other as family members. This family-like logic and professional logic co-exist with one another, by putting systems and practice in place that maintain a friendly family-like environment whilst striving to adopt professional and

bureaucratic systems to compete actively in the wider environment. The workforce view both as being equally important. However, there are moments when these two logics create tensions and challenges, mainly by the driven Director who is striving to operate in a professional manner and having to negotiate between the two on a daily basis. Even though there can be some tension, on the whole the actors involved demonstrate an approach of conformity towards undertaking this hybrid form.

### **Faith hybrid**

The South West example was the smallest organisation of the three case studies, reflecting the demand for its services in the area, its attitudes towards growing as an organisation, and why it has formed a fairly holistic hybrid form. The organisation was initiated by the intervention of the local diocese and has continued to be founded on strong religious principles by the majority of the trustees and workforce practicing their faith. The organisation became established through the social and human capital from the board and economic capital from the local authority that saw the implementation of some bureaucratic systems from the early years. Although the organisation had formalised some of its procedures and policies this was mainly done ceremoniously to give the appearance of operating in a professional manner rather than the actors seeing things differently. This was recognised by the daily practice of the key actors refraining from becoming professionalised or taking on too many procedures, this was rationalised by the Director undertaking a motherly role, not wanting the focus to stray from the service users or alter the family-like environment. Furthermore, the embedded religious beliefs of the

workforce conflicted with more professional or market like logics, by wanting to maintain a philanthropic model and not expand outside the organisation's means.

The organisation successfully operated in this manner due to being fairly sheltered in its environment - supportive local authority ties, few local competitors, and having successfully formed a niche position within the market. Therefore the organisation has had little drive to compete strategically within the environment. Instead the organisation has formed strong connections with other faith based organisations that reinforce its religious values and beliefs, but are also essential in providing both emotional support to the workforce and a substantial source for donations. As a result of its operating environment and the actors maintaining the religious logic, the organisation has been resistant to developing into a hybrid organisational form.

### **Entrepreneurial hybrid**

The London case study differed from the others by not being established in a no-choice dispersal programme. Instead the organisation was founded from strong religious and humanitarian principles. The organisation had autonomy by being funded from an inherited trust-fund, and other than supporting community groups, was focused on international campaigning, lobbying and social justice issues. However, with the changing needs of migrants and an increase in demand from individuals seeking advice the organisation also became a service provider. The founding Director was a professional and well-connected individual, strategically forming key relationships with those

sympathetic to the cause in the local authorities and other relevant external agencies. Plus, by operating in a more competitive environment than the other case studies this Director was more prepared to take risks and formed innovative partnerships across sectors and policy fields. This included local authorities, housing organisations, the Work Programme, and the Ministry of Justice.

These partnerships not only fuelled the growth of the organisation but also enabled the actors to draw upon various professional logics from these different regimes. By doing so, it meant the organisation adopted varying combinations of procedures and practices. For example, having to meet differing funding ideologies across the broad range of stakeholders, and professionalisation of the workforce, which were ultimately driven by a professional logic. Although the organisation always had a multiplicity of logics that seemed to coexist with one another, the Director decided to professionalise the board to meet the range of new expectations and to compete in the environment. This reshuffling of the board resulted in a shift from a community logic, to a professional logic, to a more market-driven logic. These changes were reflected in the organisation finding new innovative ways to generate its own income through housing projects and a social enterprise, which also formed its own board based primarily on a market logic.

The organisation has increasingly become fragmented by the different streams of work, varying logics drawn upon for the different streams, and whilst some logics coexist with one another, others conflicted, ultimately creating an unsettled work environment. This

innovative approach to forming this hybrid organisational form has been advantageous by diversifying income and activities, but also created challenges and tensions by drawing on too many logics, creating a complex multi-layered form, although increasingly swaying more towards market principles.

Overall, these theoretical pen portraits illustrate organisational change and how they have adopted various forms of hybrid organisations. This can be further explained by drawing on the principles outlined in the theoretical framework on institutional hybridity (see section 4.2.), and how the organisations demonstrate different examples of hybrids, where multiple logics are either co-existing, competing or dominating.

The West Midlands shows an example of a co-existing hybrid, by the actors drawing on multiple institutional logics and their active role in shaping the organisation's behaviour. Although, there were some signs of tensions between the two logics, family-like and professional logics, that required continuous negotiation, it is evident the actors have formed different systems and structures to encourage the co-existence of both logics. For example, the organisation has embraced adopting monitoring and evaluating systems, and different HR procedures, whilst still managing to maintain family-like rituals and everyday practices.

Following on from this, the London case study represents an example of the complexity of multiple logics being drawn upon at the same time, and how this can result in the logics

competing with one another. The pen portrait describes that the organisation used to operate with coexisting logics, community and professional logics, similar to the West Midlands case study. However, due to a number of organisational changes, such as diversifying services and funding streams, the collective mix of individuals, and the competitive operating environment, this accentuated the number of logics being drawn upon e.g. market-like logic. This thesis has demonstrated that this complexity of logics has created different responses from within the organisation. Firstly, the multiplicity of logics can have varying influences on actors that create conflicting institutional demands, resulting in heightened tensions, challenges and dilemmas within the internal dynamics of an organisation e.g. forming an unsettled work environment. Secondly, it also spurred innovation by the organisation setting up an enterprise stream to diversify its income, but most specifically developing a separate trading arm for the social enterprise.

The South West case study differs to the other two examples, by not fitting as neatly into the dominating hybrid definition. The definition is concerned with the process of an old logic being replaced by a new logic, which in turn shifts the behaviour of the organisation and encourages organisational change. The South West case study illustrates that there has always been a dominating religious logic within the organisation, which has continued to drive the organisation's behaviour and responses to external pressures. As the pen portrait shows this logic has been maintained due to shared identities of the workforce, the strong motherly leader, established networks within the faith community, and operating in a fairly sheltered environment. Nevertheless, the pen portrait also demonstrates that the actors have drawn upon professional logics to some degree, due



to external forces from funding arrangements and the local authority. In comparison to the other case studies this was done in a ceremonious manner and the professional logics did not become deeply embedded in the daily practices. By undergoing this process it meant the organisation could operate and compete in the changing environment, whilst still resisting the organisation becoming too professionalised. Even though this case study does not fit as neatly into the dominating hybrid definition, it is still a useful framework to apply to the empirical findings by illuminating: the complexities of organisational change; the spectrum of hybridisation across the organisations; how hybridisation can be resisted by actors; and the different hybrid forms that can be produced.

## **9.5. Contribution to the literature**

Overall the thesis makes four contributions to knowledge. First, the research contributes to understanding about general organisational change in the third sector, by the research opening up the 'black box' of understanding around the complexity and diversity in organisational change. Responses are dependent on experiences of the wider environment, the actors and agency involved, the logics drawn upon and the interactions between these, which are all fluid and dynamic processes continuously reshaping the organisations. Adopting a nuanced approach to understanding the phenomenon begins to recognise the heterogeneity of organisational change, and the diversity of shapes, sizes and forms within the sector. From taking this approach the thesis demonstrates the shifting nature of TSOs, driven to be adaptable and resilient, whilst also showing there is not one path in negotiating the numerous external pressures.

This contribution to research highlights especially the value of taking a multi-layered approach, adding to theoretical discussion on organisational change. The acknowledgment of the complexities, uncertainty and messiness of researching organisational settings, meant the study undertook a multi-level analysis to explore the various processes in-depth. It has demonstrated the relevance of unpacking and explaining the various parts of organisational change. Each layer provides another insightful account of the phenomena, in particular bringing back actors and agency into the analysis, as well as, the relevance of everyday practice, discourse and emotion work. This grounded in-depth research has provided valuable empirical data that can contribute to theoretical thinking on how to understand organisational change.

Following on from this, the second contribution of the research is from looking inside the organisations and being immersed in the organisations' everyday settings. It was unsurprising that in the current turbulent environment, work conditions were deteriorating due to an increase in demand on services, coupled with a decline in resources. More specifically, it was the combination of employees regularly hearing the service users' traumatic stories, more complex case work, and growing internal pressures that was creating concern due to increasing emotional burden and heightening stress levels. Within the third sector literature there is little attention on the impact of emotional burden on the workforce, therefore, this thesis referred to the social work literature where it is viewed as a more common phenomenon. The social work field is useful by acknowledging the potential risks of this added dimension on individuals' emotional wellbeing, which

could cause stress, burnout and even result in sick leave. Whilst the findings illustrated this emotional work is fundamental to the driving force of the workforce, by remaining firmly committed to the social purpose and even justify the poor work conditions, the social work literature indicates the potential for detrimental effects on the workforce which could result in poor service provision. Therefore, these findings contribute empirical data to fill this gap in knowledge, highlighting the need for further research to be undertaken on this topic due to predicting similar experiences in other policy fields of the third sector. More importantly, these findings stress for practitioners the importance to draw upon principles and practices that are used in the social work field to improve work conditions. For example, with increasing emotional burden it is essential that both employees and volunteers have wellbeing checks; regular supervisions on case work; access to appropriate spaces for confidentiality issues; time for reflection; and training on forming boundaries particularly to nurture a work/ life balance.

Third, the research contributes to understanding organisational change in the refugee subsector, which is currently underrepresented in refugee third sector literature. Other than MacKenzie et al's (2012) study of structures of support for migrant communities, ASR literature and empirical studies on organisational change are somewhat dated and focus primarily on the emergence on RCOs. Therefore, this research contributes to filling this gap by explaining how some refugee organisations developed from being informal community groups to becoming formalised and professionalised organisations. Contrary to literature that views RCOs as being at a competitive disadvantage, this research reveals the ability of organisations to adapt to the environment and develop, and the

resilience of actors in responding to pressures within the field. The study provides empirical findings on local formal ASR TSOs, which are underrepresented in the literature, and are key to explaining why and how service provision has changed for ASRs. This provides more comprehensive knowledge to inform policy and practice by appreciating the complexity and diversity of the sector.

Four, the findings show that organisational change is produced by developing hybrid organisational forms. This research moves on from explanations of hybrids based on 'blurring' of sectors (Billis, 2010) and responding to driving forces within the environment (Smith, 2010; Harris, 2010; Eikenberry, 2009). This research supports the idea that it was 'inevitable' that TSOs took on hybrid organisational forms (Brandsen et al., 2005) due to changing with the times. However, it expands on this by undertaking an in-depth analysis of the organisational setting, distinguishing organisations as complex and multi-layered (Brandsen and Karre, 2011), and the varying ways they may respond to the environment creating differing hybrid forms (Skelcher and Smith, 2010). This research contributes empirical data that challenges the idea that organisations behave in unified ways, but by drawing on institutional logics it highlights the agency of actors in their decision making and interpretations of the environment.

The in-depth accounts contribute to the literature on hybridity, by providing a nuanced appreciation, grounded in empirical data, on the varying processes involved within different layers of an organisation and distinguishing the differing institutional logics that

can be drawn upon. Hybridisation of organisations is shown to happen at varying degrees, depending on the institutional logics drawn upon by the actors. The distinctive combination of logics and how they interrelate and interact with one another are fundamental in understanding how varying forms of hybrid organisations- in this case faith, professional and entrepreneurial- are thus established. Furthermore, the pen portraits illustrate how each organisation consists of different layers, involving processes, practices, dynamics, and actors and agency. These layers can draw upon different logics, and are essential in maintaining, disrupting or creating the institution.

#### **9.6. Reflections on the study and further research**

The strength of the research is the grounded empirical data that has been explored and used to contribute to wider theoretical debates. Due to the in-depth nature of the research the empirical data is limited by the boundaries of the case study, number of sites, the subsector, and focus of the research. The research has focused on the processes of organisational change from an in-depth micro perspective, to bring back the role of actors and agency into the analytical mix. Another way to interpret the data would be a field level perspective, exploring the ecology of services in a locality. This would provide more information on where the organisations are strategically positioned amongst other agencies, whether there have been strong supportive networks and collaborations across sectors and policy fields. For example, a research interest would be to look at how the organisations have shifted positions and what the implications of this are for organisational dynamics and trajectories.

A case study strategy has been beneficial for studying organisational change, although raises questions about the generalisability of the findings (Simons, 2009). Rather than develop empirical generalisations or typologies to be applied to other TSOs, the research seeks to identify and demonstrate three different trajectories on organisational change that are grounded in real life empirical evidence. The empirical findings have not only been explored and understood using the analytical framework (see Chapter Four), but the evidence has produced further insight into explaining organisational behaviour by identifying key issues on agency, practices and context. Theoretical generalization can be undertaken by applying the multi-level analytical framework as a way of looking at organisational settings. This has contributed to developing the theories, which Lewis and Ritchie (2013) describe as ‘theories can...be developed and refined so that they can accommodate any newly found variations in behaviours or circumstances identified through research’. The research identifies the flaws and gaps in theoretical principles that explain organisational change, and demonstrates how using a combination of these theories can create a robust and comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. The empirical findings provide nuanced data into understanding organisational change which provide an analytical approach that can be applied to understanding the processes of hybridization in other subsectors of the third sector.

The research illustrates that organisational change is a constantly moving process that is dynamic, complex and subjected to continuous interpretation. Organisational change is embedded within a wider environment that is also described as fluid, consisting of multiple

layers, which are each shifting and interacting with one another. To form this account of organisational change over time, participants have reported retrospectively on historic events. This means accounts can be rather distorted and only recount what has happened so far and not what happens next and why (Macmillan, 2011). Whilst there are few qualitative longitudinal studies on the third sector, this has recently grown in recognition by the Third Sector Research Centre undertaking its 'Real Times' study and highlighting the benefits of adopting a longitudinal perspective. Macmillan (2011) claims this approach allows research to capture how TSOs activities are operating over time, and by doing so 'this may take us towards an understanding both of what happens in practice over time in third sector organisations (and why), and of continuity and change in third sector organisations' (p.4). Recent papers in the Voluntary Sector Review by Egdell and Dutton (2017) and Chapman (2017) also demonstrate the growing popularity of third sector research adopting a longitudinal approach. Further research on organisational change would benefit from longitudinal studies, to understand how specific events and situations may be directly informed by particular exogenous forces.

The identified issues highlight possibilities for future research. The research showed emerging gaps in service provision on integration and resettlement, and hinted towards other agencies in the locality filling this void. In particular, pointing to the role of faith institutions and informal groups stepping up into this space. Further research using a field level perspective would be complementary to this research to get a full picture of the ecology of services and understanding on the new role and position of these organisations in this changing landscape.

This thesis argues the heterogeneity of organisational change and the diversity of TSOs, therefore encourages further empirical research to be undertaken across the different subsectors, exploring the different shapes, sizes and forms, which comprise the third sector. This research suggests that the multi-layered analytical framework could be applied to other subsectors, to produce a more robust understanding of the processes of change in the organisational setting. By doing so, incrementally, the evidence will provide a fuller and more comprehensive account of what constitutes this 'loose and baggy monster' (Kendall and Knapp, 1995), distinguishing different experiences of the wider environment. At the moment third sector policy development does not accommodate or capture this diversity. Therefore, more research is needed to build knowledge and expertise to inform robust third sector policy development, to become more inclusive, particularly for organisations operating on the edges of the welfare system.



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